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The Visva-Bharati Quarterly

Vol. I. Part 1, New Series.

May—July, 1935.

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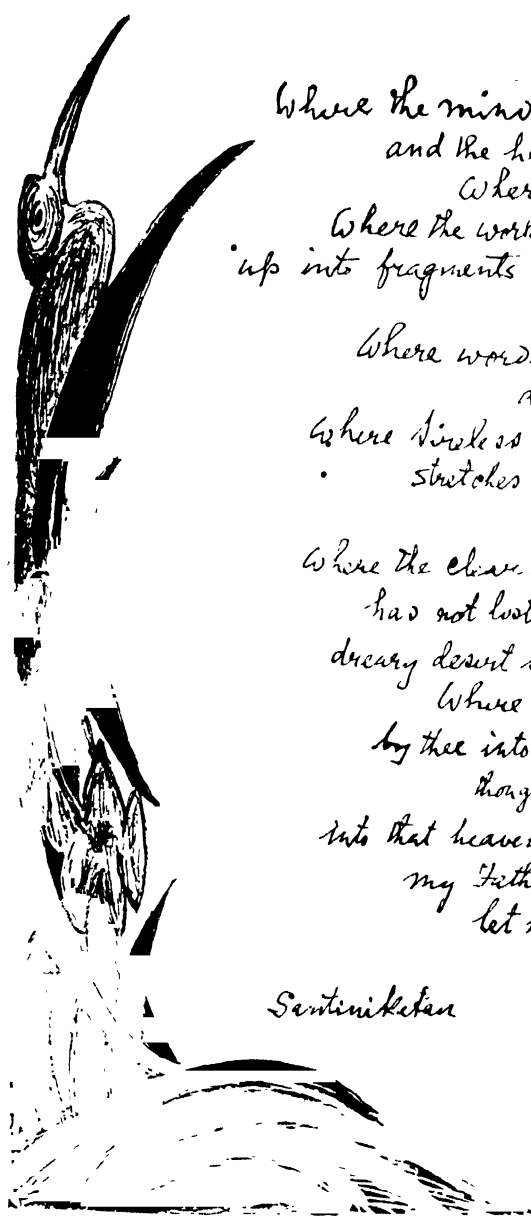
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ଶ୍ରୀରାମଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ନାଥ
କଳିଙ୍ଗ
ନାଥ

By Mukul Dey

(By courtesy of Abanindranath Tagore)



Where the mind is without fear
and the head is held high,
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken
up into fragments by narrow domestic
walls;

Where words come out from the
depth of truth;
Where tireless striving
stretches its arms towards
perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason
has not lost its way into the
dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward
by thee into ever-widening
thought and action —

into that heaven of freedom,
my Father,
let my country awake.

Santiniketan

Rabindranath Tagore.

THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

May

New Series, Vol. I. Part I.

1935

ART AND TRADITION

By Rabindranath Tagore

There come in our history occasions when the consciousness of a large multitude becomes suddenly illumined with the recognition of something which rises far above the triviality of daily happenings. Such an occasion there was when the voice of Buddha reached distant shores across all physical and moral impediments. Then our life and our world found their profound meaning of reality in their relation to the central person who offered us emancipation of love. And men, in order to make this great human experience ever memorable, determined to do the impossible: they made rocks to speak, stones to sing, caves to remember; the cry of joy and hope took immortal forms along hills and deserts, across barren solitudes and populous cities. A gigantic creative endeavour built up its triumph in stupendous carvings, defying obstacles that were overwhelming. Such heroic activity over the greater part of the Eastern continent clearly answers the question: *What is art?*—Art is the response of man's creative soul to the call of the real.

But the individual mind according to its temperament and training has its own recognition of reality in some of its special aspects. We can see from the Gandhara figures of Buddha that the artistic influence of Greece put its emphasis on the scientific aspect, on anatomical accuracy, while the purely Indian mind dwelt on the symbolic aspect and tried to give expression to the soul of Buddha, never acknowledging the limitations of realism.

To the adventurous spirit of the great European sculptor, Rodin, the most significant aspect of reality is the unceasing struggle of the incomplete for its freedom from the fetters of imperfection, whereas before the naturally introspective mind of the Eastern artist the real appears in its ideal form of fulfilment.

Therefore, when we talk of such a fact as Indian Art, it indicates some truth based upon the Indian tradition and temperament. At the same time we must know that there is no such thing as absolute caste restriction in human cultures; they ever have the power to combine and produce new variations, and such combinations have been going on for ages, proving the truth of the deep unity of human psychology. It is admitted that in Indian art the Persian element found no obstacles, and there are signs of various other alien influences. China and Japan have no hesitation in acknowledging their debt to India in their artistic and spiritual growth of life. Fortunately for our civilisations, all such intermingling happened when professional art critics were not rampant and artists were not constantly nudged by the warning elbow of classifiers in their choice of inspiration. Our artists were never tiresomely reminded of the obvious fact that they were Indian; and in consequence they had the freedom to be naturally Indian in spite of all the borrowings that they indulged in.

A sign of greatness in great geniuses is their enormous capacity for borrowing, very often without their knowing it; they have unlimited credit in the world market of cultures. Only mediocrities are ashamed and afraid of borrowing, for they do not know how to pay back the debt in their own coin. Even the most foolish of critics does not dare blame Shakespeare for what he openly appropriated from outside his own national inheritance. The human soul is proud of its comprehensive sensitiveness; it claims its freedom of entry everywhere when it is fully alive and awake. We congratulate ourselves on the fact, and consider it a sign of our being alive in soul, that European thoughts and literary forms found immediate hospitality in Bengali literature from the very beginning of their contact with our mind. It ushered in a great revolution in the realm of our literary expression.

Enormous changes have taken place, but our Indian soul has survived the shock and has vigorously thriven upon this cataclysm. It only shows that though human mentality, like the earth's atmo-

sphere, has undoubtedly different temperatures in different geographical zones, yet it is not walled up into impassable compartments and the circulation of the common air over the entire globe continues to have its wholesome effect. So let us take heart and make daring experiments, venture out into the open road in the face of all risks, go through experiences in the great world of human mind, defying unholy prohibitions preached by prudent little critics, laughing at them when in their tender solicitude for our safety they ask our artists to behave like good children and never to cross the threshold of their school-room.

Fearfully trying always to conform to a conventional type is a sign of immaturity. Only in babies is individuality of physiognomy blurred, and therefore personal distinction not strongly marked. Childishness as a mentality can easily be generalised: children's babbling has the same sound-tottering everywhere, their toys are very nearly similar. But adult age is difficult of classification, it is composed of individuals who claim recognition of their personal individuality which is shown not only in its own uniqueness of manner but also in its own special response to all stimulations from outside.

I strongly urge our artists vehemently to deny their obligation to produce something that can be labelled as Indian art, according to some old world mannerism. Let them proudly refuse to be herded into a pen like branded beasts that are treated as cattle and not as cows. Science is impersonal: it has its one aspect which is merely universal and therefore abstract; but art is personal and, therefore, through it the universal manifests itself in the guise of the individual, physiology expresses itself in physiognomy, philology in literature. Science is a passenger in a railway train of generalisation; there reasoning minds from all directions come to make their journey together in a similar conveyance. Art is a solitary pedestrian, who walks alone among the multitude, continually assimilating various experiences, unclassifiable and uncatalogued.

There was a time when human races lived in comparative segregation and therefore the art adventurers had their experience within a narrow range of limits, along the deeply-cut grooves of certain common characteristics. But today that range has vastly widened, claiming from us a much greater power of receptivity than what we were compelled to cultivate in former ages. If today we have a living soul that is sensitive to ideas and to beauty of

form, let it prove its capacity by accepting all that is worthy of acceptance, not according to some blind injunction of custom or fashion, but in following one's instinct for eternal value—the instinct which is a God-given gift to all real artists. Even then our art is sure to have a quality which is Indian, but it must be an inner quality and not an artificially fostered formalism; and therefore not too obtrusively obvious, nor abnormally self-conscious.

When in the name of Indian art we cultivate with deliberate aggressiveness a certain bigotry born of the habit of a past generation, we smother our soul under idiosyncracies unearthed from buried centuries. These are like masks with exaggerated grimaces, that fail to respond to the ever changing play of life.

Art is not a gorgeous sepulchre, immovably brooding over a lonely eternity of vanished years. It belongs to the procession of life, making constant adjustment with, surprises, exploring unknown shrines of reality along its path of pilgrimage to a future, which is as different from the past as the tree from the seed. Art represents the inexhaustible magnificence of our creative spirit; it is generous in its acceptance and generous in its bestowal; it is unique in its manner and universal in its appeal; it is hospitable to the All because it has the wealth which is its own; its vision is new though its view may be old; it carries its special criterion of excellence within itself and therefore contemptuously refuses to be brow-beaten into conformity with a rhetoric manufactured by those who are not in the secret of the subtle mysteries of creation, who want to simplify through their academic code of law that which is absolutely simple through its spontaneity.

The art ideal of a people may take fixed root in a narrow soil of tradition, developing a vegetable character, producing a monotonous type of leaves and flowers in a continuous round of repetitions. Because it is not disturbed by a mind which ever seeks the unattained, and because it is held firm by a habit which piously discourages allurements of all adventure, it is neither helped by the growing life of the people nor does it help to enrich that life. It remains confined to coteries of specialists who nourish it with delicate attention and feel proud of the ancient flavour of its aristocratic exclusiveness. It is not a stream that flows through and fertilises the soil, but a rare wine stored in a dark cellar underground, acquiring a special stimulation through its artificially nurtured, barren antiquity. In exchange for a freedom of movement which is the prerogative of vigorous youth, we may

gain a static perfection of senility that has minted its wisdom into hard and rounded maxims. Unfortunately, there are those who believe it an advantage for a child to be able to borrow its grandparents' age and be spared the trouble and risk of growing and think that it is a sign of wealthy respectability for an artist lazily to cultivate a monotonously easy success by means of some hoarded patrimony of tradition.

The genesis of all art traditions must have been in some gestures in the modes and mediums of expression that spontaneously came to men of genius and were followed by others whose admiration naturally pursued the path of imitation. In poetic literature it is our common experience to find that striking phrases and suggestive mannerisms, originating from the writings of some popularly accepted poet, spread fast in a soil of susceptible mentality. However, if the literature has any vitality it is cured of that infection before it develops a poison that is fatal. The malady takes a chronic persistence when it finds its breeding place in an inert period of mental degeneracy. When something in art, which is too peculiar in its presentment, shows an incorrigible tendency to repeat itself we may be sure that it is a sign of the waning life. If it is a fact that some standard of invariable formalism has for ages been following the course of the arts in India, making it possible for them to be classified as specially Indian, then it must be confessed that the creative mind which inevitably breaks out in individual variations has lain dead or dormant for those torpid centuries. All traditional structures of art must have sufficient degree of elasticity to allow it to respond to varied impulses of life, delicate or virile; to grow with its growth, to dance with its rhythm. There are traditions which, in alliance with rigid prescriptions of rhetoric, establish their slave dynasty, dethroning their master, the Life-urge, that revels in endless freedom of expression. This is a tragedy whose outrage we realise in the latter-day Sanskrit literature and in the conventional arts and crafts of India, where mind is helplessly driven by a blind ghost of the past.

And yet we may go too far if we altogether reject tradition in the cultivation of the arts, and it is an incomplete statement of truth to say that habits have the sole effect of deadening our mind. The tradition which is helpful is like a channel that helps the current to flow. It is open where the water runs onward, guarding it only where there is danger in deviation. The bee's life in its

channel of habit has no opening: it revolves within a narrow circle of perfection. Man's life has time-honoured institutions which are its organised habits. When these act as enclosures, then the result may be perfect, like a bee-hive of wonderful precision of form, but unsuitable for the mind which has unlimited possibilities of progress.



ART AND EDUCATION ·

By James H. Cousins

Notwithstanding the high value that Indian thought from time immemorial has set on objects of art as helps towards spiritual culture, art never got an integral place in either the Hindu, Buddhist or Mussulman curricula. The artist was trained, but not educated. The finished product was more esteemed than its human producer. Even now, at any rate in South India, we acknowledge the ecstasy that the musician creates in us by giving him a garland in the auditorium—and his food on the pial if his name-termination on earth does not permit his having it with those whom he has lifted to heaven.

Plato did recognise creative art in education, though he was rough on certain of the poets. But between him and the twentieth century, educational thought in the Occident took no thought for art. Herbert Spencer, with all the cheek that mere brain can show, turned it away from the emotional nature of the student.

Even as near our time as 1917, an American educationist, Dr. H. H. Horne in *The Philosophy of Education*, had to confess that aesthetical education “is the most neglected feature of our curriculum, and yet it stands as an essential constituent of the child’s present and future environment, and is the product of one of the deepest phases of the human consciousness.”

It is not far from certain that the neglect of an essential human constituent in the preparing of the young for life will lead to a menacing lop-sidedness in the individuals and in the social organism which they collectively make up; that is to say, it is fairly certain that the neglect of art in education has led to the appallingly inartistic life of humanity and to that most inartistic and inhuman of human activities, warfare.

The problems of human life cannot, we may confidently assert, be solved, and humanity set free from its subhuman obsessions, until a radical change has been effected in the general attitude and way of living. And this can only be done completely by an education that is itself complete in bringing the impulses and desires of humanity under educative self-discipline equally with the mental and actional capacities of the individual.

There is a vague recognition of the need of emotional education in the phrase that is so often used when all else has failed—"What is needed is a change of heart," the utterer usually waiting for the others to do the changing. But the mere sentimentality that the phrase expresses is a feeble thing beside the urges of feeling-necessity. What is needed is (to use a suggestive figure of speech that is becoming healthily frequent in educational literature) the "canalising" of the floods of emotion, that is, the putting of them under control in definite directions, to the vitalising of thought and action, instead of letting them work havoc on their way to futility or to disappearance in "the dreary desert sand of dead habit." The digging of canals in young clay is a much easier matter than blasting them through old rocks. The canalising of the creative impulse in childhood and youth by art is the only educational wisdom.

In a recent article on *Peace and Education*, Dr. Maria Montessori puts this idea in her clear calm way. Touching on the central element in the present world-crisis, war, she asserts that "the cause of war does not lie in armaments, but in the men who make use of them." The fundamental need of the crisis, therefore, in her view—a view which I heartily share, though I do not think that armaments are as innocent as she believes—is an education that will allow humanity to grow up with "a healthy soul, enjoying the full development of a strong character and a clear intellect." This means a complete education; an education based on the assurance, now strengthened by observation, that its completeness will lead humanity away from the manifest anarchy produced by a selfish and predatory education to an instinctive order subjectively imposed on human life by the authority of its own higher nature.

Dr. Montessori's reference to "a healthy soul . . . strong character . . . clear intellect" is not a casual phrase: it is the essence of her experience as an educator. It is her response to the inescapable triangle of external human capacities—the emotional capacity through which the soul-ful qualities of aspiration and creative expression unfold and realise themselves; the dynamic capacity through which the attainments and qualities of the other capacities are fused into the synthetical revelation of character; and the cognitive capacity which observes and contemplates the phenomena of experience gained through feeling and doing.

The most essential of these is the soul. For while the processes of thought and action are related to subjective and objective time and space, and undergo modification that is sometimes felt by the inner nature of the best human spirits to be slower than a crisis demands (as at present in world-affairs), the processes of the deeper psychological capacity called by Dr. Montessori the soul have the immediateness of intuition. Thus, in relation to the problem of war, the cognitive capacities of the heads of various nations are working out pacts and alliances; but their faith in these as preventives of warfare is not absolute, for their dynamic capacity is busy in preparations for feared conflict. But, says Dr. Montessori, "War would not be a problem at all for the soul of the new man; he would see it simply as a barbarous state, contrasting with civilisation, an absurd and incomprehensible phenomenon."

She declares that "to conquer war, a sincere and inspired voice would be enough, crying, like Jonah: Be ye converted and repent, or Nineveh shall be destroyed." But the succession of inspired voices that have called on humanity to be sorry for their misdeeds and to turn against them, and have had no better reply than the state of alleged civilisation today, does not appear to confirm Dr. Montessori's optimistic confidence. We are, I feel, nearer actual possibility in her declaration of her discovery that the child, educated in the true way, is "a passionate lover of order and work."

If we put the declaration the other way round, that the child who is liberated through a complete education is a passionate lover of *work* and *order*, we have a statement of a law of human life that is therefore a law of education—the law that life perpetually seeks expression through human activity, and simultaneously safeguards itself against dissipation in futility, by imposing on action, and by imparting to the objective results of action, the orderliness of intention, design, and unity.

This love of work and order is not only true of children who have had the opportunity of free expression: it has been found to be equally true of youths whose activities have been diverted into delinquency and social disorderliness. Given the opportunity to express the energy of life through the order-inducing media of art-crafts, they have recovered the fundamental human necessity of work and order which Dr. Montessori and other wise experimenters in education have observed, and have been transformed into happy and useful citizens.

This being so, it looks as if the swing of the educational pendulum from cramming towards the satisfaction of the real needs of embodied life had only got half-way when it determined to be strictly etymological and set about in good earnest e-ducing the capacities of the individual. It is possible that *conscious* e-ducing (trying to pull out powers whose qualities and ratios of interaction are far from clear to even the most sensitive educator) may be a subtle frustration of the real business that wears the disguise of the word education. What life apparently asks is not for good-hearted people to stand in its way, offering it enticements to being *led forth*, but to have its way cleared of obstructions to its own choice among the paraphernalia of *work* and *order*.

This would seem to mean a handing over of education to childish anarchy. There is, no doubt, as much risk of disturbance to the settled habits and notions of the elder generation (that stands in front of the younger and talks rhetorically of youth being the future) in a sudden change from bad to good as from good to bad.

There is, of course, no risk of such suddenness in educational organisation and method evident anywhere—though the anarchy is with us even now, as seen in an honest look at the state of the world, and an equally honest look at the physique, character, habits, feelings and intellectual stamina of the youth of India who are undergoing the process of education to-day. Dr. L. P. Jacks, whose experience and thought place his utterances as nearly beyond dispute as any utterance can be, lays the responsibility for the disorder in human life today at the door of education in his book, *The Education of the Whole Man*. He says: "... the practice of perfection is not initiated by learning the three R's nor by anything which proceeds from these useful acquisitions. It begins much deeper down, in acquisitions which should be called 'elemental' rather than 'elementary.' For want of a good sound 'elemental' education which aims at developing the fundamental virtue of self-control . . . democracy is moving towards a disaster which elementary education of the book-say and hear-say type will rather hasten than avert."

That "sound elemental education" is, as Dr. Jacks claims, the education of the whole individual as a creator. "The whole man is," he asserts, "a creator. Educate him in his wholeness as such, and the inner vacancy of his being, which hungers for creation, and can never be satisfied with anything else, will be filled."

Now this naming of man as creator (and of course man is here taken as the *homo*, the human being irrespective of sex) is just putting into another form of expression Dr. Montessori's declaration that the liberated child is a lover of work and order. For creation is orderly work—something done, and done under the laws of its own being. These laws are, in some way as yet beyond our analysis, based in nature, and affiliated with universal law. Liberation through creation is therefore the sure way to individual happiness through the release of inevitable creative tension into inevitable conditions governing creative forms, conditions that, because they are the inevitable means to happy achievement, are accepted, and in their acceptance induce in the creator of them "the fundamental virtue of self-control."

"This means that art" (to state in Dr. Jacks' words what I have often stated in my own) "(art always understood in its catholic sense as the most excellent doing of what needs to be done) must find a larger and more central place in educational practice. It means that increased weight must be thrown into awaking and training the sense of beauty, the greatest of our lost inheritances, but the best of all prophylactics against vice, the most vitalising and uplifting of all the positive motives that interest and actuate the whole man . . ."

Dr. Jacks' declaration expresses the two main influences of art-expression on human nature—as preventive of vice in all its forms, and as a curative agent (therapeutic) where vice is already active.

The therapeutic influence of art-expression is useful in the present diseased state of humanity. But the mere application of remedial measures to enable a diseased individual to recover the capacity to repeat the actions that produced the disease, will not lead humanity to any kind of health. The ultimate need is a true prophylactic—not the ingestion or injection of foreign entities into the emotional stream to create a state of armed neutrality, oscillating between periods of warfare between themselves and other foreign entities; but the clear-ridding of the imagination, the emotions, and their mental and physical collaborators, of every disease-producing element through leaving them open to the detergent flood of inspiration and illumination from the lofty springs of man's higher nature.

This process—and it puts a complete education into a sentence—carried out to any degree, will inevitably be accompanied by

some degree of beauty. But beauty is not its objective. The pursuit of beauty can itself become a pander to sensuality. It is thus exploited the world over today in the service of rapacious and ruthless commercialism. Art in education is not as a merely aesthetical matter. It is, in the profoundest sense of the term, a spiritual necessity, and, in the profoundest sense of the term, a spiritualising power.



The Conception and Development of Sunya-vada¹ in Medieval India

By Kshiti Mohan Sen

Men have exhausted all intellectual resources to express the Supreme Truth. They have tried to express² the Ultimate Reality through affirmation, through negation, through all other possible means; but have failed to give adequate expression to it.

If we try to define the Supreme Truth through affirmation, it gets limited by the material facts of this universe; and if we try to express it by negation, no positive clue can be given. Therefore some sages have attempted to express it through absolute negation. This paper is a historical study of this great endeavour.

Sunya (शून्य) Doctrine in the Rig Veda

A striking example of such an endeavour we find in the Rig Veda. The seer describes the state before creation and existence with these wonderful words:

“Then there was neither existence (सत्) nor non-existence (असत्) (RV. X, 129, 1).

“Then there was neither death nor immortality” (ibid., 2).

“Then there was nothing besides Him” (ibid., 1).

“Who can know, who can declare, whence has come what is the source of this wonderful creation?” (ibid., 6).

In the Upanishads

Then comes the gathered wisdom of the Upanishads. Isha Upanishad says: “He pervaded because He is incorporeal (अकाय) (Isha Up. 8).

“He provides for all because He is colourless (अवर्ण)” (Svet. Up. IV, 1).

“This great *Atman* is without birth, without decay, without death” (Br. Up. IV, 4, 25).

“The source of all being (भूतयोनि) is all-pervading

1 (शून्यवाद) Doctrine of Voidness.

(सर्वगत); is at the same time devoid of all qualifications" (Mu. Up. I, 1, 6).

"That Unalterable, they say, is the negation of all attributes" (Br. Up. III, 8, 9).

"But the entire world is held together by the law of that Unalterable" (Br. Up. III, 8, 8).

"Our senses, our knowledge, fail to reach that Primal Source of all" (Kena Up. I, 3).

"That Primal Cause is devoid of all attributes, has no beginning, no end; is supremely great and permanent.

"By knowing Him one becomes free from death" (Katha Up. I, 3, 15).

"He, the Self, is to be described as *not so, not so*, (नेति नेति) (Br. Up. IV, 4, 22).

Here we see how the sages are driven to the way of negation in their anxiety to express the quality of the Absolute; and how very inadequate even that way is.

In Buddhism (Mahayana महायान)

This intellectual formula (नेति नेति) gradually evolved into a positive assertion of a definite state of spiritual consciousness, *Nirvana* (निर्वाण). The fundamental truth of the Budhists was non-permanence, soullessness, and peace in *Nirvana*.

The doctrine of *Sunyata* (voidness) in Budhism has been so elaborately studied and surveyed by eminent scholars, that it would be superfluous to discuss its development in this paper. The *Mahayana* literature, itself, has done fair justice to it: in poetic vein by Ashvaghosa, in philosophic dignity by Nagarjuna (नागार्जुन). This much is clear that, as defined by Nagarjuna, *Sunya* is not mere negation.

"This *Sunya* is neither existent nor non-existent, neither both of them nor non-both of them."

Rather the existence of everything has been made possible because of this *Sunyata* (शून्यता).

"He that is allied to *Sunya* is allied to all that is; he that is removed from *Sunya* is removed from all that is" (Nagarjuna, *Madhyamika Sutra* (माध्यमिक सूत्र), 24, 14).

This doctrine was wonderfully expounded by some medieval thinkers: Everything is transient and subject to change, therefore *Sunya*. This *Sunya* alone is truth, this is the highest reality.

Aryadeva has also very successfully surveyed this doctrine. Neither the Yogacharis, nor the Vajrayanis, could proceed with their philosophies without drawing upon it. Philosophers, like Maitreyanatha and Asanga, were Yogacharis. In fact, the *Paramarthalakṣaṇa* of Asanga is the *Sunya* doctrine of Nagarjuna:

“Not existent (सत्) nor non-existent (असत्); not thiswise (तथा), nor otherwise (अन्यथा)” (*Mahāyāna Sūtralankāra* (महायान सूत्रालङ्कार), (Levi), VI, I. p. 22).

In the Tantras

According to the Gayatri Tantra, *Sunya*-worship alone, without any *nyasa*¹ or *pranayama* (प्राणायाम breath-control), sanctifies everything (pariccheda I).

The Kamadhenu Tantra affirms: “*Sunya*-knowledge is beyond all *Sunya*, it is absolute *Sunya*, it is pure, without any stain or falsehood; its brightness is like unto that of ten million suns” (patala XI).

“One should do the *japa* (जप ritual of meditation) of *Sunya*, which is illuminated in the firmament of the heart” (patala XXI).

While the Jnanasankalini Tantra (ज्ञानसंकलिनी) says: “Paramatma is *Sunya* where mind gets merged” (33).

“*Sunya* element is life” (ibid., 34).

Again: “Meditation is the process of merging the mind in *Sunya*, no other meditation is worth the name” (ibid., 54).

Sunya is thus made the repository of all consciousness. So too, the Supreme God, *Mahadeva*, affirms: “I am *Rudra*, (रुद्र) I am *Sunya*, I am all-pervading, and unqualified” (ibid., 85).

Sunya in the Dharma Cult of Bengal

Sunya-Purana (11th century A.D.?):—The worship of *Sunya* came to be fully established in Bengal with the *Dharma* Cult. According to the *Sunya-Purana*, the Supreme God is *Sunya-rupa* (ed. by Charu Chandra Banerji, p. 152).

This *Sunya* has been worshipped by Haricandra (ibid., 111, 1). The *Sunya Purana* says: “*Sunya* is a lake which is filled up with the water of *bhakti*” (ibid., 177, v. 10).

1 (न्यास) Assignment of the various parts of the body to different deities, which is usually accompanied with prayer and corresponding gesticulations.

In the *Dharma Puja Vidhana* of Ramai Pandit of Bengal (11th century A. D.?), we see very clearly how this *Sunya*, being *Niranjana* (stainless), came to be identified with *Dharma*. Through *Niranjan* Cult, *Sunya* underwent a very interesting transformation: it came to be identified with *sahaja*¹, in which form it is to be found in the age of Ramananda. (We find *Sunya*, in its pure form as well as identified with *sahaja*, in Kabir and many post-Kabir medieval saints, none of whom was an idolator. However, we shall discuss them later on.)

In the *Dharma Puja Vidhana* occurs the following question and its answer, as part of *Dvar Bheta* (द्वार भेट) ceremony: "O pandita, where is your abode, whom do you worship, what form do you meditate upon?" (ibid.—Bengal Sahitya Parishat—p. 165).

"My abode is in Balluka,² I adore God without form, I meditate on *Sunya* form, and I worship image with form" (ibid., p. 165).

In the same work (p. 70) we find this beautiful *dhyaṇa* (ध्यान):

"He that has no beginning, nor end; no figure nor form; no birth nor death; who is all pervading and unlimited by purpose; who is stainless and immortal; who is to be realised only through *yoga*—may that *Sunya-murti* be my saviour!"

"In the beginning there was nothing: darkness was everywhere and *Sunya* was all-pervading. Then there was only *Brahma* and no second" (ibid., pp. 199—203).

Again: "In the beginning was only *Sunya*; creation came out of the activity of *Brahma* with *Sunya* meditation" (ibid., pp. 200—201).

Dharma, who is *Sunya-rupa*, has "no form, no body, no *ninad* (I think, *nidan*, i.e. cause), no birth, no image. Salutation to that *Sunya*!" (ibid., p. 90, v. 146).

"*Dharma* is without beginning, without end. He is *Sunya-rupa*, Divine *Niranjana*. Salutation to *Dharma*!" (ibid., p. 91, v. 152).

This *Sunya Dharma* is not a negative entity, for "He is everywhere, and He is the Primal Cause" (ibid., p. 92, v. 157). And though He is *Sunya-kara* (शून्याकार) yet He is the "Fulfiller of all desires" (ibid, 75, v. 26). Therefore *Sunya-niranjana* was regularly invoked.

1 (सहज) literally, "inborn", "natural".

2 Name of a river in the south-west of Bengal.

In the *Dharma-mangala* of Ghanarama. (ed. by Gurudas Chatterji, 1902) again we see that *Dharma* is *Sunya*, *Dharma* is *Niranjana* (ibid., pp. 2, 169). He is *Hari* and He is *Vishnu* (ibid., pp. 112, 125, 138, 151, 157, 244). He comes to save His devotee in the form of *Narayana*. His abode is *Golaka*; He is *Pandava-sarathi* (पाण्डव-सारथी) (ibid., pp. 233, 234).

So, too, in the *Dharma-mangala* of Mayurabhatta (which is one of the earliest books of that kind), *Dharmasila* (धर्मशीला) has been called *Vishnusila* (विष्णुशीला). Manik Ganguli, too, in his *Dharma-mangala* (1467 A. D.), calls *Kailasa*, the abode of *Sunya*.

In Natha Sect

The medieval mystics accepted *Sunya* in their own way : with the idolators it became sanctified in various kinds of idols or sacred stones; with the non-idolators it remained as a way of expressing the idea of the infinite. It also got mixed up with their own doctrines of *sahaja* (सहज), *samarasa* (समरस), *ekarasa* (एकरस), etc., etc.

We have no space here to deal in detail with *Natha-pantha*. Those who are familiar with this school, know that *Goraksanatha* (12th century A. D.?) was deeply touched with *Sunya* doctrine. In the *Goraksa-samhita* we find: "a devotee, sanctified by *samarasa* remains in ecstasy in *sunya*" (ed. by Prasanna Kumar Kaviratna, 1st edition, p. 183, panchama amsa, 105).

In the *Goraksna Vijaya* by Sheikh Faizulla (15th century A. D., according to Dr. D. C. Sen), there is mention of *Sunya-mantra*. *Sunya-jnana* has also been mentioned (p. 162).

In the Bengali songs of Gopichand, as published by the University of Calcutta, we find *Dharma-raj* called, *Sunya-raj* (pp. 475, 485, 497).

Wherever we see prevalence of *Dharma* Cult, there also we come across the predominance of this doctrine. In Orissa the *Dharma Gita* of Mahadeva Das is regarded as a sacred book. There we read that *Sunya-Purusa* was occupying infinite *maha-sunya*. He was *Nirguna maha-sunya-murti* (निर्गुण महा-शून्य-मूर्ति). Becoming *saguna*, he was transformed into *Brahma*. From him came out *Adya-Sakti* (आद्याशक्ति), the mother of *Brahma*, *Visnu* and *Siva*.

In the *Brahmanda Bhugola Gita* of Balaram Das of Orissa, we read that God was *Sunya-rupa* in the beginning. In the *Saraswat Gita* of the same author, the Creator has been called *Maha-sunya*.

**Jayadeva (1170 A. D.?) and Ramananda
(14th Century A. D. ?)**

In Northern India, during the time of Ramananda, the *Sunya* doctrine got mixed up with the *Sahaja* cult. According to the *Grantha Sahib* of the Sikhs, both Jayadeva and Ramananda were worshippers of *sahaja*. Says Jayadev: "I have become absorbed in His love, I have obliterated myself in Him, and have acquired *Brahma-Nirvana*" (*Grantha Sahib*, Rag Maru). The *Grantha Sahib* has preserved for us the famous *vani* (वाणी) of Ramananda: "Where shall I go? The sport (लीला) is going on within me. My mind likes not to move: it has grown immobile... I was going to worship in the temple of *Brahma*: *Guru* says the *Brahma* is within" (*Grantha Sahib*, Rag Basanta).

Ramananda is here against all ceremonialism. He is a *sahaja* devotee. In the *Sahajananda Grantha* of Bhakta Sundaradas (born 1596 A. D.), we read these interesting verses: "That *Sahaja Niranjana* we find everywhere. In that *sahaja* are all saints held together... Saint Soja and Saint Pipa are immersed in *Sahaja*; Saints Sena and Dhanna are drinking the delight (*ras*) of *Sahaja*. Of *Sahaja* was Ravidasa a devotee; in *Sahaja* alone was the delight of *Guru Dadu*." In the *vanis* of all these medieval saints and mystics, we find *Sahaja* and *Sunya* blending into each other.

Kabir (1398 A. D. ?)

In the *vanis* of Kabir, in particular, we find this blending reaching its full synthesis. Kabir's genius was prolific, and a good deal of his writings are only imperfectly known. To collect all his utterances on *Sunya* and *Sahaja* would need a volume in itself. I shall, therefore, confine my references to one handy volume only, which was published by the Nagri Pracharini Sabha in 1928.

That Kabir's synthetic genius could not get satisfied with the merely negative significance of *Sunya*, is well brought out by his answer to the question he asks in the padavali No. 164: "Where you reside, O *Niranjana*, is there anything positive, or is there only *Sunya*?"¹

¹ कहीं कबीर जहाँ बसहु निरंजन तहाँ कुछ आहि कि सुन्य ॥

In reply he warns himself: "A devotee loses his own self if he forgets God and places his love in *Sunya*" (ibid., astapadi ramaini p. 239).

Again: "What is caste? He has created by mixing water and air. With *Sabda* (logos) has *Sunya* been filled up" (ibid.).

Within our body "is the firmament resounding with *anahada* (infinite) music; there the mind is merged in '*Sunya*'" (ibid., pad 7). "Within our heart are the *Ganga* and the *Yamuna*: *Sahaja-Sunya* is the *ghata* (घाट) where they meet" (ibid., lai anga, 3).¹

"*Sahaja-Sunya* is the ever-growing tree which can absorb the whole universe of land and water" (ibid., parisista-pada, 108).

"*Sunya* is the infinite which is beyond all limitations" (ibid., Parcha Anga, 11).

This *Sunya* is not void or empty; for here is the dwelling place of the "man of heart" (ibid., Gurusikha Hera Anga, 7). "Sri Kamalakanta resides here on the twelve-petaled lotus" (ibid., parisista pada, 17).

"Music is going on in the *Sunya* sphere, and to that music is my mind dancing" (ibid., pad, 72).

"That *rasa* (रस) is available to him who has been initiated by a *sat-guru*" (ibid., pad, 74).

"In that *sunya* sphere have I taken my dwelling-place, that I may ever remain immersed in that *rasa*" (ibid., pad, 154).

"Such a reality is *sunya* that no room is there for imaginings" (ibid., parisista pada, 211).²

"The illusion of life and death ceases if one while living can remain immersed in *sunya*" (ibid., 73).³

But "Says Kabir, the limitations and illusions break, and while living our mind enters into *sunya*" (ibid., 63).

"When the personal *sunya* embraces the universal *sunya*, I will become *samadarsi* (one whose synthetic vision takes in all alike) and will be like wind" (ibid., 24).

"To break the unending chain of life and death, one should enter into *sunya*" (ibid., 91).

¹ गंग जमुन उर अंतरै सहज सुनि ल्यौ घाट ॥

² छत्र गुफा महि आसज बेसज कल्प बिबर्जित पंथा ॥

³ जन्म मरण का क्रम गया.....

जीवत छत्रि समानिया..... ॥

Dadu (1544-1603 A. D.)

Though born several generations later, Dadu was the disciple of Kabir. He, too, has thrown considerable light on *Sunya*. To him, as to Kabir, *Sunya* as a negation was unacceptable. He cries: "What mean you by giving name to nothingness, which has no reality at all?" (Dadu, *Sacha Anga*, 795).¹

"The whole world is deluding itself by accepting non-existence as a reality" (ibid., 796).

He accepted that subtle *sahaja* infinity which has no form nor any limitation, and which the ordinary man repudiates (*Bhesa Anga*, 26).

He says: "He who reduces his passions to ashes, lives in *sahaja* and meditates on *Sunya*, attains universal receptiveness and becomes unconquerable for ever" (Raga Bitawal, 349).

"In every form, in every soul, everywhere is that *sahaja* immanent. There is the field of the sport of *Niranjana*. No *guna* (qualification) can have access there" (*Parcha Anga*, 56).

In the *Parcha Anga* of Dadu there are fourteen *vanis* (56-68), dealing with *sahaja-sunya* as a lake or an ocean, which is the repository of the supreme *rasa*. Here, however, we shall quote from only two of them.

"By the brink of that *sahaja* lake, I brought my heart at His Lotus-feet. There I found my beloved, the primal *Niranjana*" (No. 60).

"Filled with fulfilment is that ocean of bliss. Its waters are bright and pure. Dadu says, none but the thirsty may drink therefrom" (63).²

"*Sunya* is the ocean of *sahaja*: mind is the pearl-diver" (67).

"God is the Lotus in that *Sunya* lake: mind is the bee" (66).

Considering the difficulty of attaining to that reservoir of bliss by any external means, Dadu asks: "This is a way where no foot may tread: how can any being reach there?" (Dadu, *Lai Anga*, 10).

¹ कुछ नाहीं का नावं क्या जे धरिये सो झूठ ॥

² सब सागर सुभर अर्थां डगलक निर्मल नीर ॥

Later on, he answers: "*Para-Brahma* has given the way: *sahaja* meditation on love is the thing essential" (ibid., 74).

"Let the mind dwell in *sahaja-sunya*, which lies between *yoga-samadhi* and *premananda*" (ibid., 9).

The *Dharma Puja Vidhana* (p. 93) of Bengal describes three kinds of *sunya*: (i) *Maha-sunya*, (ii) *Parama-sunya*, (iii) *Anila-sunya*. Dadu also has mentioned three kinds: (i) *Kaya-sunya*, (ii) *Atam-sunya*, (iii) *Parama-sunya*. In *kaya-sunya* the five elements (senses) reside; in *atam-sunya* life gets its expression; in *parama-sunya*, there is union with *Brahma* (*Parcha Anga*, 53).

We also find mention of *Brahma-sunya*, where resides the infinite, unlimited *Brahma*, devoid of form. In *vani* No. 50, of the *Parcha Anga*, we learn that the first three *sunyas* are concerned with the world of form, whilst the fourth *sunya* is *nirguna*. In that *sahaja-sunya* is going on the sport of love. In *vanis*, 54 and 55, Dadu sings:

"*Sahaja-sunya* is the source of all: the sun, the moon and the firmament. In it find their expression, earth, water, wind and fire. Time, passion, soul, mind and its illusion, and form and breath—all have their source in it; that also is the abode of God. That *sahaja-sunya* is with everyone" (*Parcha Anga*, 54—55).

Sundaradasa, who was a disciple of Dadu, also says: "There is no *dhyana* (meditation) like that of *sunya*: it is the best of all *dhyanas*" (*Jnanasamudra*, *Rupatita Dhyana*, 83). "By the grace of God, let your *śamadhi* rest in *sunya*" (ibid., *Gurusisya Laksana Nirupana*, 12).

Among the disciples of Dadu was one, *Rajjab* (16th century A. D.), a deeply spiritual man. His principal dictum was:

"Out of 'Nay', nothing alone can come: reality can only come of 'Yea'."

What then is the use of *sunya*? he asks. *Sunya* is the space where life finds its expression and its possibility of growth. Life has been possible only because it is surrounded with the freedom of *akasa* (ether). No life could have existed, had this *akasa* been something less ethereal. And the guru (teacher) who has to open and unfold the inner life of his disciple, must also be like this *sunya* (*Rajjab, Gurudeva Anga*, 56).

"*Sunya* is sunk in the five elements (and senses), and is at the same time free of them" (*Sakhibhuta Anga*, 8).

"Both *sunya* and the Lord are without beginning, without end, and without the middle" (*Hairana Anga*, 3).

"The devotee and the cloud are alike: they both take their *sunya*-nectar" (*Sadha Anga*, 1).

"*Sunya* is filled up with consciousness and there *sahaja* abides" (*Gurudeva Anga*, 85).

"Like the cloud gaining colour against the background of infinity, the ego gains its colour whilst resting against *sunya* and the Lord" (*Sakhibhuta Anga*, 10).

"Lighting, wind, and cloud, they are inconstant. *Sunya* is ever steady" (*Prasidhha Sadhaka Anga*, 11).

"The highest bliss of the personal consciousness is to be merged in the Infinite 'Consciousness: the personal *sunya* has its fulfilment in the infinite *Sunya*'" (*Sajivani Anga*, 4).

Guru Nanak (Born 1469 A.D.)

In the *vanis* of Guru Nanak, too, we find numerous references to *sunya* and *sahaja*, though here we shall quote only a few.

When Pandit Brahmadas asked the Guru what there was before Creation, the Guru replied: "Then there was neither day nor night; nor sun nor moon. His *samadhi* was in *sunya*" (*Grantha Sahib*, Raga Maru).

"He is *Sunya-kala*" (*ibid.*).

"The Yogis meditate on *sunya*" (*ibid.*, Asa Astapadi).

The *Prana-Sangali* (प्राण-संगली), according to the Sikhs, contains Guru Nanak's authoritative statements on yoga. It is supposed to be the record of his conversations with the yogis he met in Ceylon, when he went there to give spiritual instruction to Raja Sivanabha, written by his disciples Gheto and Saido, from memory; although many scholars maintain that the book was written a long time after Nanak. Anyhow, the book tells us a great deal about the yoga doctrines of the Sikhs.

It tells, in the first chapter, how "the Lord unfolded the universe in many colours out of *sunya*" (p. 1).

The second chapter is about meditation on the Supreme Thatness. We read how Nanak had his entry in the *sunya* palace and how he got the priceless jewels therefrom (p. 8).

The third chapter talks of Life and Form emerging out of *sunya* (p. 17): It says: "Everyone is saying, *sunya*, *sunya*. The Lord, Himself, is engaged in *sunya* meditation. When He, in *sunya* meditation, alone is, then who is the *guru* and who the *chela* (disciple)?" (p. 16).

"When the Lord was alone in that darkness, then He, Himself, was the guru, He, Himself, the chela" (*ibid.*).

"In *sunya* alone is the unfailing *sahaja*" (*ibid.*, p. 6, 36).

"He alone is a *sannyasi* who comprehends *sunya*" (p. 9, 58).

"Let the muezzin make us hear that *anahada* music of the call for prayer! Let him bow his head in the *sunya* mosque?" (p. 10, 64).

"In the *sunya* chamber within, the door is made of *vajra*"¹ (p. 11, 69).

Besides these saints named above, there were more than two hundred celebrated saints and thinkers in India, during a period of about four centuries, of whom we know. Most of them have talked of *sunya* and *sahaja*. Here we shall give only a few specimens, which will show us that, in tracing the development of our doctrine, we cannot ignore their *vanis*. *

Of them was Saint Akha. He says: "*Sunya* is not light, nor water, nor earth, nor air. It is beyond firmament. There is only—Not That. That *sunya* is without the three *gunas*: it has no concern with virtue and vice. It is not red, yellow, white, black or blue. There is neither movement nor fixity. How then can one describe the *sunya*? O Akha! recognise that God who is like *akasa* in the heart of the guru" (*Anubhava Bindu*, Chappai 6).

Again: "The way-farer is *sunya*, ether is *sunya*, the shadow of the devotee is *sunya*" (*Akha-krta-kavya*, II, p. 202).

"That *sunya* is beyond ether: it has neither form nor name. When I looked out for *sahaja-sunya*, I discovered the region of fulfilment" (*ibid.*, p. 202).

"*Sahaja-sunya* is not only not negative: it is a thing to be courted and loved" (*ibid.*, p. 202).

So also Khimji has said: "The intoxicated yogi sat on *sunya*. What sport was going on all around! What was subjective became objective, and everywhere was sport" (Khimji Sahib, *Yoga Vedanta Bhajana Bhandara*, p. 43, pada, 2).

Among the Auls, Bauls, Natha-panthis and the Niranjans of Bengal, we find an abundance of relevant matter which, however, is quite beyond the ambition of this paper to exhaust. Here we must be content with a few references: "*Sunya* is free, like free infinite space. No seed can sprout, no life can move unless there

¹ Literally means, thunder-bolt.

is free *akasa*. *Akasa* is the indispensable space; it is the refuge of the life of movement. It is also the indispensable receptacle of the life of consciousness."

"There is *sunya* within ourselves: there is eternal freedom there. In that *sunya*-chamber, we may meet our Beloved. That is the only fit place for union with the Beloved and for eternal love."

Bauls sing: "Guru must be *sunya*, for he never crushes down the potential life and the spiritual individuality of his disciple. Guru inspires and fosters; never smothers."¹

"Brahma is *sunya* ; *mukti* and *nirvana* are also *sunya*."

"*Parabrahma* may be realised only in *sahaja-sunya* within."

"You may realise Him," says Gangarama, "in your *sunya*-chamber, otherwise all is darkness."

Says Baul Bisa: "Alas! the *rasa* which wells up between *rupa* and *a-rupa* has not been realised by you. If you could comprehend the wonderful Thatness, you would be inebriated and would realise your *sunya* (void) as *purna* (full)."²

A Baul *vani* of North Bengal says: "We can realise our *sunya* if we properly balance our *sadhana* by uniting *Siva* and *Sakti* within us."³

¹ শুক্ল পোষে কিন্তু পেষে না ।

² বলা বলে বিশা তালকানা,
রূপ অরূপের রয় মাঝে রস,
তার স্বরূপ পাইলা না !
ও সেই বুঝে তত্ব হইতি মন্ত
দেখতি শূন্য পূর্ণাকার ।

³ This article in a more complete form has been accepted for publication by the All India Oriental Conference at their last Baroda Sessions,

THE KOPAI*

Rabindranath Tagore

Idly my mind follows the sinuous sweep of the Padma † roaming under a distant sky. On the further side of hers stretches the sand-bank, insensitive to the living world, defiant in its sublime inutility.

On this side crowd the bamboo, the mango tree, the patriarchal banian; the obsolete hut in ruins; the aged jack tree of a massive trunk; the mustard field on the slope of the pond; the cane bush round the ditch by the lane; the remnant walls of an indigo plantation clinging to a silenced time, its row of casuarinas murmuring day and night in the forsaken garden.

The colony of Rajbanshis dwell there near the rugged bank fractured into zigzags, offering a scanty pasture to their goats; in the adjacent upland the corrugated roofs of the market storehouses keep staring hard at the sun.

The whole village stands shuddering in constant fear of the heartless stream.

The proud river has her name in the venerable texts; through her veins runs the sacred current of the Ganges.

She remains remote. The homesteads she passes by are tolerated by her, not recognised; her stately manner has a response in it to the majestic silence of the mountain and the large loneliness of the sea.

Once I had my boat secured at the landing slope of one of her islands in an isolated distance, far from all responsibilities.

I opened my eyes before the gaze of the morning star in the

* A modest, though coquettish river that half encircles Santiniketan.

† A mighty river that thunders midway through Bengal.

dawn, and slept on the roof under the constellation of the seven sages.

The heedless water ran by the edge of my desolate days, even as the traveller walking close to the joys and sorrows of the wayside homes, yet free from their appeal.

Now at the end of my young days I have come away to this plain here, grey and bare of trees, allowing a small detached spot for the swelling green of the shadow-sheltered Santal village.

I have for my neighbour the tiny river Kopai. She lacks the distinction of ancient lineage. The primitive name of hers is mixed up with the loud-laughing prattle of the Santal women of countless ages.

There is no gap for discord between the land and water in her intimacy with the village and she easily carries the whisper of her one bank to the other. The blossoming flaxfield is in indulgent contact with her as are the young shoots of rice.

Where the road comes to an abrupt break at the brink of her water she graciously makes way for the passers-by across her crystal-clear garrulous stream.

Her speech is the speech of the humble home, not the language of the learned. Her rhythm has a common kinship both with the land and the water; her vagrant stream is unjealous of the green and golden wealth of the earth,

Slender is her body that glides in curves across shadows and lights, clapping hands in a tripping measure.

In the rains her limbs become wild like those of the village girls drunk with the *mahua* wine, yet she never even in her wantonness breaks or drowns her neighbouring land; only with a jesting whirl of her skirt sweeps the banks while she runs laughing loud.

By the middle of autumn her waters become limpid, her



current slim, revealing the pallid glimpse of the sands underneath. Her destitution does not shame her, for her wealth is not arrogant, nor her poverty mean.

They carry their own grace in their different moods, even as a girl when she dances with all her jewels aglimmer, or when she sits silent with languor in her eyes and a touch of a tired smile on her lips.

The Kopai in her pulsation finds its semblance in the rhythm of my poet's verse, the rhythm that has formed its comradeship with the language rich in music and that which is crowded with the jarring trivialities of the work-a-day hours.

Its cadence fails not the Santal boy lazily tramping along with his bows and arrows; it times itself to the lumbering market cart loaded with straw; to the panting breath of the potter shouldering earthen-wares in a pair of hanging baskets tied to a pole, his pet pariah dog fondly following his shadow; it moves at the pace of the weary steps of the village schoolmaster, worth three rupees a month, holding an old torn umbrella over his head.

Santiniketan,
17 March 1935.

(translated)

MA'ARRI THE FREETHINKER

By M. Ziauddin

*"Untruth has corrupted the world and each wrangling sect exalts its own gospel ; I say, if hate had not been in the nature of man, churches and mosques would have flourished side by side."*¹

Freedom of thought was characteristic of the original Islam. Individual's right to differ in opinion was conceived by Muhammad as mercy of God. The social and religious principles inculcated by him were broad and simple. The whole scheme worked round the fundamental assertion of the unity of Godhead ; and round this central point of faith Muhammad called upon humanity to gather and thus be saved from division and destruction. This scheme of bringing into harmony the diverse races and religions and uniting them in freedom, failed in its purpose—because of this very insistence on becoming universal which the older religious systems resisted ; and so eventually Islam was forced into a separate cult, asserting its identity against the rest, which it had been its purpose to harmonise into one. However, its inherent simplicity remained intact for some time and kept it extremely tolerant, receptive and comprehensive in general attitude. Apart from the respectful attitude that early Muslims had for the founders of different religious systems, great credit should also be given to them for the spirit of toleration they showed to the freethinkers of their own community.

What is particularly worthy of admiration is that the early Muslims not only tolerated but appreciated, even revered, such an anti-Islamic poet and freethinker as Abul-'Ala Ma'arri. "Remarkable it is," observes Von Kremer, "that, while in Europe, precisely at that time, a bloody war of extermination was being waged against Albigenses, in Islam the poet (Ma'arri) was allowed to avow and sing his note of free-thinking, without let or hindrance."² "It is astonishing", remarks R. A. Nicholson, "to reflect that a spirit so unconventional, so free from dogmatic prejudice, so rational inspite of his pessimism and deeply religious notwithstanding his attacks on revealed religion, should have

1. Ma'arri, *Lusumiyyat*, Cairo, (1891), 11. p. 82.

2. *Islamic Civilization* II, p. 247.

ended his life in a (Muslim) Syrian country-town some years before the battle of Senlac."¹

Abul-'Ala Ma'arri, the blind Arab poet, was a thinker of a breadth of vision the like of which humanity has produced only very rarely. Honest to the core of his heart, he embodied in his person the very fire of the freedom of mind, and was "one of the greatest moralists of all time, whose profound genius anticipated much that is commonly attributed to the so-called modern spirit of enlightenment."²

Ma'arri was born in 973 A. D. and died in 1057 A. D. at Ma'arra, a town in Northern Syria. When about four years of age he had the misfortune of a severe attack of small-pox which rendered him blind. After his preliminary studies at home, under the guidance of his father, he was sent for his education at first to Aleppo and then to Tripoli and Antioch.³ After having completed his courses, he went to Aleppo again, this time to practice the art he had specialized in, namely that of an encomiast. He wrote for some time his panegyrics on courtiers, but soon got disgusted with the business and came back to his native town. Here he joined a public educational institution in the capacity of a lecturer in Arabic poetry and philology at the bare annual income of thirty *dinars*. His students were not slow in realising his greatness, and gave him their enthusiastic appreciation and honour. The reputation thus acquired brought him also the patronage of the courtiers who occasionally rewarded him liberally for the panegyrics he wrote for them. It was during this period that he completed his *Saqt-az-Zand* (*Sparks in the Fire-Stick*).

Finding Ma'arra too small a town for the display of his poetic talents, he came to Baghdad, the capital of the Muslim empire. Here he at once got the opportunity for reciting his poems in the most select assemblies of the *litterateurs* of the capital, who admired him greatly. At Baghdad Ma'arri came in touch with the outstanding representatives of different creeds whom Baghdad had attracted because of its liberal intellectual atmosphere. Here the Jews, Christians, Budhists, Brahmins, Zoroastrians, Manicheans, Mystics, Rationalists, even rank Materialists, had gathered to contribute their share to the

1. *Literary History of the Arabs*, (Nicholson), p. 324.

2. *ibid.*, p. 316.

3. *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 8, pp. 222, 223.

commonwealth of human knowledge. Ma'arri was soon fed up with all of them. Before eighteen months had elapsed, he left the capital for his home, with the grim intention of shutting himself away from society and the world. However strong that desire for ascetic seclusion might have been, the poet in him was never conquered and he could never completely sever himself from men and their company. Moreover as his genius had been widely recognized by then, students came to him from all parts of the empire to attend his lectures. At this period of his development he gave up his cherished theme of ridiculing the political and religious institutions. He took up Man instead and meditated on him, apart from any creed and nationality to which he might belong. He saw before him the problem of humanity as such and not that of races or individuals defined by their peculiar limitations and conventions. At this stage of his intellectual progress he completely shook off such remnants of dogma as had escaped his analytic eye till then. This is also the period in which he wrote his best work *Luzumiyyat*. The work is notable for its freedom of vision, its uncommon boldness of expression and originality of style, though very deeply coloured with the saddest hue of pessimism. His poetry is frank and straight-forward, smooth in its flow and vigorous in its enunciation of his ascetic creed. He, however, successfully avoided exciting the fury of the orthodox. He has good deal of that sort of stuff in his poetry which may be said to have been put in deliberately to throw dust in the eyes of the orthodox and to put them off the scent. He admits this frankly: "It is society," he says, "that compels me to play the hypocrite."¹ "I raise my voice to utter absurdities aloud while truth I only whisper in hushed voice."² "Hide thy thoughts even from thy bosom friend."³ Yet Ma'arri was not so cautious as he paints himself to be. For, inspite of all his caution, he pronounced blasphemies loud enough. Nor did he escape the vigilant orthodox eye, though he was never persecuted.

When he discusses the nature of religion Ma'arri's views are astonishingly modern. He considers religion to have sprung

1. *Luzumiyyat*, 11 p. 139.

2. *Ibid.*, 11 p. 36.

3. *Ibid.*, (1890) 1., 272.

from the double source of human fear and greed. To him divine revelation could never be a fact; he simply refuses to discuss this point and ignores it completely. Religion is defined by him as a product of the human mind, the result of the education and training by the society and its conventions, which force men to believe in what their forefathers have believed. Ma'arri does not believe in miracles either. His words in *Risalatul-Ghufran* (*The Epistle of Forgiveness*) are as clear as words can be:

"Sometimes you may find a man skilful in his trade, perfect in sagacity and in the use of arguments, but when he comes to religion he is found obstinate, so does he follow the old groove. Piety is implanted in human nature, it is deemed a sure refuge. To the growing child that which falls from his elder's lips is a lesson that abides with him all his life. Monks in their cloisters and devotees in the mosques accept their creed just as a story is handed down from him who tells it, without distinguishing between a true interpretation and a false. If one of these had his kin among the Magians, he would have declared himself a Magian, or among the Sabians he would have become nearly or quite like them."¹

Naturally he does not spare any religion in his general onslaught: "The Muslims are stumbling and the Christians are gone astray," he declares, "the Jews are bewildered and the Magians are misled. Mankind is divided into two groups: that of the enlightened knaves and the religious fools."² At another place he says: "Men live as their fathers lived and behaved, and they follow their religion mechanically as their fathers did before."³ He even doubts the value of their confession of faith: "In all your affairs you blindly conform to your tradition and remain satisfied; even your confession of faith, 'God is One', is a blind conformity."⁴

Ma'arri's remarkable work *The Epistle of Forgiveness* is characteristic of the cynical nature of his genius. That it should have survived notwithstanding its blasphemous contents surprises us most. Only two copies of it exist today, of which one is in the possession of R. A. Nicholson. He has described its contents in

1. *Lit. Hist.* pp. 317, 318; J. R. A. S. for 1902, p. 351.

2. *Lusumiyyat*, II, p. 201.

3. *Ibid.*, I, 248.

4. *Ibid.*, I, 252.

the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1900 and 1902. In it the poet surveys the Paradise and finds it inhabited by the heathen poets of Arabia. Allah, through His mercy which always exceeds His anger, forgives the heretics and lets them enjoy the Paradise of the Faithful. Hence the title of the work: *The Epistle of Forgiveness*. Here the poets are found discussing and arguing with each other in the presence of a certain 'Ali bin Mansur', and behave like perfect Bohemians. The remaining half of the work consists of the opinions of certain freethinkers of Islam whose verses Ma'arri quotes with remarks on their beliefs from the orthodox side which he himself represents.

Ma'arri's genius is critical and destructive; scepticism is its characteristic strain; and yet his views are not devoid of a positive moral background. Strangely enough, he seems to have been essentially religious though the thing he hates most is religion. His morality is based on the dictates of reason and conscience and not at all on any divine revelation. Underlying it all is a characteristic basis of monotheism, if belief in the almighty and inexorable Fate can be called monotheism. "Serve God alone and not his servants, for religion enslaves you while reason emancipates you."¹ This God is not the God of revealed religion but that of the intellectual necessity.

For guidance in life Ma'arri does not trust anything save reason: "Reason is the most precious gift," he says, "that you have received."² This is how he explains his position: "Religious traditions of yore have come down to us, which, if they were genuine, would of course be of a great importance, but they are badly attested. Hence consult your reason and heed not anything else. Reason is your best adviser on earth."³ "Be guided by reason and follow whither it leads you."⁴ Again: "My reason is indignant that it should be put aside against the opinions of the founders of the Maliki and Shafi'i schools of Jurisprudence."⁵ "Reason, its thou alone that speakest the truth."⁶

Ma'arri considers reason to be by its nature antagonistic to

¹ Ibid., I, p. 326.

² Ibid., I, p. 151.

³ Ibid., p. 288.

⁴ Ibid., II, p. 394.

⁵ Ibid., II, p. 150.

⁶ Ibid., II, p. 196.

religion. For "it is not reason that gives birth to religion; religion is given to people by their kith and kin."¹ He cannot bear to see the spiritual mask that religion puts on the face of human tradition and habit. Again and again he points out to us the absurdity of those institutions that create malice and hatred between sections of mankind. "Whenever a new religion gets established, its adherents begin to condemn and revile other faiths: had it not been for this hate that is rooted in the human mind, churches and mosques would have arisen side by side."² Again he points out: "Truth is not to be found in the Pentateuch, and you may praise your Lord and pray, and go round and round the Ka'bah seventy times, not seven times, even then you may remain impious."³

Considering the philosophical view he subscribes to, Ma'arri was naturally sceptic of the absolute nature of holiness that religion tries to attain through rituals and spiritual exercises. "Nothing endures," proclaims the poet, "every thing is doomed to perish, even Islam itself. Moses taught and passed away. Christ succeeded him. Then came Muhammad with his five daily prayers. A new faith will come later, supplanting, outshining this. Humanity is thus hounded to death between yesterday and today."⁴

Religion, like all other created things, is doomed to perish, says he, and he is not sure of the existence of a thing known as 'soul' which might survive death. When all is said and considered about faith, he gives us his confession:

What is Religion? A maid kept close that no eye
may view her;
The price of her wedding-gifts and dowry baffles
the woer;
Of all the goodly doctrines that I from the pulpit
heard,
My heart has never accepted so much as a word.⁵

Yet Ma'arri is not without a strong moral background which he accepts as a sufficient basis for the span of life men are perforce

¹ Ibid., II, p. 403.

² Z. D. M. G. vol. 31, p. 497.

³ Z. D. M. G. vol. 31, p. 483.

⁴ *Islamic Civilisation* (Khuda Bakhsh's translation) II, p. 244.

⁵ *Lit Hist.* p. 321 ; Z. D. M. G., Vol. 31, p. 427.

to live through. This morality is based on reason and the individual's understanding of justice. He is an agnostic with regard to the nature of soul. If there be a soul, he is not sure if it carries away with it any portion of the mind. If one is to believe in a soul carrying within itself the memory of this life's events, then Ma'arri thinks the mind must accompany it. However that may be, he does not consider the theory of the transmigration of souls plausible either. He seems to have conceived of innumerable cycles of creation renewed after a general destruction of the whole thing. This is obviously an Indian theory of the cycles of *yugas* succeeded by *pralaya*.

Ma'arri believes in the practical value of such moral principles as are rational and withal beneficial to humanity. In his opinion: "Devout is he who, when he is able to feast his desires, abstains from them with courage." ¹ Such a discipline is conducive to an enlightenment which progressively elevates man from simple animal life to a higher life commonly known as spiritual. Thus the exercise of virtue reveals the ethereal element in man or brings about the realisation of his spirit, while indulgence in passions drags man to the level of the brutes. But as regards the ultimate value of this moral discipline, as well as of the spiritual realisation that may follow, Ma'arri is frankly sceptic. At places he seems to question the results of strict morality, as when he says: "Among them the best are just like unfeeling rocks that commit no wrong and tell no lies." ² (I suppose "the best" are the virtuous men.) Hence the note of futility of the whole thing which rings so strongly in his poetry: "You need not seek to better this world which God Himself never meant to be virtuous." ³

Ma'arri's philosophy is decisively agnostic, if not positively sceptic. For him there exists no ultimate truth, no final certainty of knowledge, to which man can attain. All that man can arrive at is, at its best, a guess: "There is no certainty; my utmost effort at arriving at truth results only in mere opinion or conjecture." ⁴ Neither is there any possibility of arriving at certainty with regard to the nature of our being. "Colocynth knows not what gave it its bitterness, nor honey knows why it is so sweet;

¹ *Lusumiyat* II, p. 159.

² *Ibid.*, I, p. 95.

³ *Ibid.*, I, p. 110.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, p. 23.

you ask me but I have no answer to offer, and, the man who says 'I know', he is a liar." ¹ No ground for certainty or finality on this earth, neither in argument nor in fact. Facts roll on eternally, the drama of world-history is interminably projected in the infinity of time and space. "Time is like a poem that rolls on eternally." ²

His logic (and probably his blindness too) forced him to adopt an ascetic life. Conscious of the doom of humanity, the wretchedness of the lot of man on earth, blindly led by a blind irrevocable futility, he chose to sing the song of hopelessness: "Whatever time holds within its grasp, it holds in ignorance, no use venting our anger on it." ³

Ma'arri is obviously much influenced by Indian thought. Now and then he makes a direct reference to Indian thoughts or customs. He praises the Indian habit of burning the dead, and argues in its favour. He also appreciates those Indian monks who burnt themselves alive to get rid of their existence. He considers injuring or killing an animal a grievous sin. Ma'arri remained a celibate all his life, and considered procreation a mortal sin in man, which he was proud never to have committed. It is said he desired a verse of his to be inscribed on his grave which ran: "This wrong was done to me by my father, but to none by myself." ⁴ And so he advised his friends: "If you love your children and want to be kind to them then leave them within your loins." ⁵ Marriage is a sufficiently grievous wrong that man can commit but polygamy is still more so; he thinks it is unjust to the wife and disastrous to the husband.

Ma'arri's ascetic principles are almost all to be found in the following poem:

"Sick in intellect and faith, yet harken to my announcement of truth. Show yourself not coarse by eating what has been thrown out of water, and adopt not as your food that which has been slain, consume not eggs, for their yolks are meant to feed developing chickens and not fair women. Practice not deceit upon birds who cannot defend their little ones, for violence is the worst

¹ Ibid., I, p. 103.

² Z. D. M. G. p. 47 : *Islamic Civilisation* II, p. 245.

³ *Lit. Hist.* p. 321 ; Z. D. M. G. vol. 38, p. 522.

⁴ *Lit. Hist.* p. 317 : Margoliouth, op. cit., p. 133 of the Arabic text.

⁵ *Lusumiyat*, I, 397.

of misdeeds. Disturb not the honey-combs of the bees, which they have diligently filled with the scented nectar of flowers. They have not been gathered for strangers, but are intended for presents and friendly gifts. From all these misdeeds I have washed my hands. Ah! only I wish I had thought of them before I became grey.”¹

Again: .

“Stain not your swords with blood, nor yet plunge your lances in gaping wounds. Delightful unto me are the ways of those that live like monks, only if they do not consume that which others have acquired by toil and effort.”²



¹ *Lusumiyat*, I, p. 232.

² *Ibid.*

GANDHI AND LENIN

By Nirmal Kumar Bose

In the midst of the gloom which encircles mankind on all sides, there are always men who struggle with the surrounding darkness, and succeed in saving their souls from its oppressive influence. Of such men in the present age, we can think of two, who bear the marks of having successfully fought that battle and whose lives bear testimony to the enormity of suffering through which they have had to pass. Lenin and Gandhi. Both these men resemble one another in their relentless pursuit of Truth, as well as in their great passion for the poor and the oppressed. Yet, in the matter of their inner convictions and attitudes, the two men stand widely apart from one another.

According to both Lenin and Gandhi, the world's suffering is to-day caused by the existence of an unjust system which allows one class of men to live upon the toil of another. The system not only blights the lives of those who are exploited, but degrades those who live by that act of exploitation. The system has therefore to be broken down if we want to make men happy; in this both Gandhi and Lenin agree. But it is in regard to their methods and the possible chances of the success of these methods, as well as to the mental attitudes which they bring to bear upon their task that the two seem to challenge one another.

Lenin believed that the unjust social and economic system of today exists because it is the exploiters who hold the power of the State in their hands. If once that power came within the control of the exploited, they would so build society anew as to make a repetition of the wrongs impossible. All his efforts were therefore directed to securing such revolution as would bring the State under the dictatorship of the proletariat; which would exercise its powers to remodel man's outlook as well as to make it impossible for any man to deprive others of the fruits of their labour.

Gandhi, however, holds quite a different view. He is radically opposed to the centralization involved in Lenin's scheme. He believes that such centralization is always dangerous because of the chances of corruption at the centre. If it be argued that good

men could be found to occupy the position at the centre, he asks, why should not they be found in sufficient number to run autonomous village units all over the country? Gandhi does not believe that the core of the problem lies in the authority of the State; nor that the evil is due wholly to those who hold that authority. He finds that the State can only exercise its power and abuse it (as it does today), because men are afraid of violence all the while. The governors are cruel, selfish, and violent; while the governed are cowardly and afraid of losing their comforts and material possessions in defence of their rights. Those rights can only be won and maintained if we cast aside all fear of violence from our hearts and, also, if we ourselves labour with our own hands, i.e. do not live upon the labour of others. These two are the fundamental duties which we must fulfil so that we can enjoy the right of living a free and happy life; and conversely, it is the absence of these two which makes it possible for injustice to perpetuate itself.

All of Gandhi's efforts, therefore, are directed towards stamping out the fear of violence from our hearts: violence to our person and violence to our possessions. We must not only be non-violent ourselves but must be *unafraid* of the violence of others. And he proposes to achieve this by a system of constructive work on the one hand, and of progressive non-violent non-co-operation with those who might be in power, on the other. Gandhi believes that although such a type of revolution may appear to be a slow process, yet, in the end, it is the quickest revolution, as it is also the surest. In the very act of breaking down the present order, the masses evolve the necessary strength for self-rule, while all the class-interests which oppose them are automatically rooted out or sterilised in that process.

This difference in method between Lenin and Gandhi is really rooted in a fundamental difference in their respective faiths. For both, though practical, were essentially men of faith. Lenin held that man is a creature of circumstance; so that if he is to be made moral, he should be placed under conditions such that morality and self-sacrifice are stamped upon him through his environment; while any exercise of selfishness is, at the same time, rendered impossible. All his efforts were, therefore, directed towards the building up of an architectural system under which man should develop the habit of living a just and moral life. But Gandhi seems to have little faith in such morality evoked by circumstance. For him such a morality is untrue and, therefore, impermanent. He be-

believes that Man is the master of Form and not Form that of Man. Permanent changes can come only from within, and our principal object should therefore be to help the individual to grow more moral and more heroic from within. Any change in social form must only be an expression and a measure of man's inward progress.

Gandhi is characteristically Indian and individualistic in this respect. All his plans of social or political reform are so designed that men can work them either in company or alone; and more perfectly when alone than otherwise. We may characterize the difference between Lenin and Gandhi by saying that the former builds his hopes upon man as he actually is, while the latter upon what it is possible or what it is desirable for him to be. But whether it is wiser in the end to rely more upon possibility than upon actuality is more than one can say. .

Lenin was like a mighty warrior who held aloft a great hope for mankind, while his soul was steeped in the dream of a millennium when no man should live in idleness and all would live in love and employ their talents to serve their community. With a strong taste for reality, he turned to History for a sanction of the hope which burned within him, and there he discovered the finger of Fate pointing towards such fulfilment. It is because of the fatalistic nature of this belief that Lenin could employ the most pitiless means of destruction to overcome the obstacles that hampered him in his march. The path may lie today, so he thought, through violence and hatred, but the day will come when it will be time to lay down the sword or perhaps melt it for building the plough, for then man will have no reason to hate man. But until that day arrives, our path must lie through violence and bloodshed, for that is the inevitable law of History. Lenin was like a workman, passionately hammering away at his anvil in the night, in the red glow of a lamp which burned incessantly before him, while he was entirely oblivious of the dark sky which hung above his head. And in that sky, the cold stars shone with a glitter which knew no compassion for the love and the hate which burned within the bosom of the workman.

But Gandhi, the pilgrim soul, is ceaselessly on the march in a journey which is without end. With the staff of the beggar in his hand, he travels towards a distant light which draws him inexorably towards itself. Hope burns within him and he yields to its impulse, for there is nothing else for him to do. In the inner

depth of his being, he knows that it is not his business to ask if ever the millenium will come or not. All that he is called upon to do, at the present moment, is to submit to the forces of his nature and thus fulfil the task for which he was appointed by God. "To become like the clay in the Potter's divine hand", is his ideal. And that is also the reason why he can say in true humility that his task is the "service of God and therefore of humanity."

Gandhi believes that God never admits us into the design of the future. He has given us no control over the end, and only a limited one over the means; which means is love. And Gandhi claims that he has discovered the secret whereby love could be used to transform one's environment, and free human life from the oppression which is weighing upon it. That secret is to love the oppressors of mankind as oneself, even while we are opposing them by active non-co-operation in order to wreck the system for which they stand. It is a terribly difficult task to which he calls us, to oppose a tyrant even while bearing no malice in our heart against him. But as this is also the noblest path, Gandhi asks us to spare no pains in following it perfectly. All his genius is exercised in discovering this path of love in the midst of worldly conflicts: the results he leaves in the keeping of God.

But weak as we are, our strength fails when we are confronted by the dreariness of this march. We find that this cheerless concentration upon the means only leaves us despairing of our own weakness. So we turn to Gandhi with the question: why is it wrong to be intoxicated with a dream and a hope when darkness presses upon our souls from all around? Gandhi answers: indeed, you should believe in the promise of the day when man shall disdain to enrich himself at the cost of his neighbour and all will live in work and love; but, in the meanwhile, take care of the means.

Secretly, to the chosen few who can bear it, he whispers a less luring truth. To them, Gandhi says, the promise of the dawn is but a bait with which God tempts His creatures into action, along paths which He chooses. And if He so wills, He might anyday sweep aside all our hopes and joys and hurl us into the depths of unutterable misery, for He is above all the greatest tyrant ever known. Our business is to toil ceaselessly at our appointed task, and throw ourselves against every obstacle which oppresses human life, without regard to the consequences. We belong to the gang of workmen employed to keep the road ready

for God's chariot to pass by. Even with regard to his motherland, he says that it is true he wants his countrymen to enjoy political freedom, he wants food and raiment for the hungry millions; but these are only the things with which India will clothe herself before she is called upon, in the interest of humanity, to embrace Death as her divine bridegroom. "My idea of nationalism is that my country may become free that, if need be, the whole country may die, so that the human race may live."

These are indeed awful words. But Gandhi consoles us by saying that the powers of patience which reside within the soul are also unlimited. If we throw aside all our attachment to the body, which is the source of all fear, and have our being in God, who is the repository of all strength, we shall never lack in the necessary strength to bear His message of love in our lives.

This is the prospect which Gandhi holds out to his comrades: no vision of any distant millenium, only the vision of the thorns which we shall encounter in our pilgrim march. He shows us only the way, even while seeking it himself, whereby we can lay down our lives so that humanity may live. And in that path God himself is transformed into the Flaming Sword which leaps and plays over the road of thorns. The sole aim of our existence is to surrender ourselves to that Almighty Being. Our own joys and sorrows sink into the uttermost insignificance, while life and death are transformed into so many milestones on our lonesome march.

This ultimate acceptance of the permanent nature of that which is sorrow and suffering to us, and from which we shrink instinctively in our personal attachment to life, does not spring in Gandhi from any inner morbidity of spirit. It comes from a recognition of the fact that both light and darkness, life and death, are parts of one Universal Being, which we may not accept in fragments. It is this aspect of Gandhi, with its apotheosis of suffering, which has often drawn forth the instinctive repulsion of the poet Tagore, whose admirable temper has now and then been ruffled by the prospect of a flood of morbidity overcoming the land in the wake of Gandhi's political movement. But in Gandhi himself there is not the least trace of morbidity, for his soul has been bathed clean by the tears of humble admission of weakness before God.

If that be the character of Gandhi's philosophy, devoid of hope, of romance, how is it, it might be asked, that men follow him in

thousands even when he asks them to follow on such a dreary road? The secret of this lies, not in his philosophy but in the personality of the man. And here perhaps we reach not only the inner truth of the present revolution in India, but of all great movements in the history of the world. Russia today is inexplicable except in terms of Lenin, the Christian movement is equally so without Jesus, while India's *Satyagraha* is likewise understandable only with reference to the character of the man who leads it today.

A lone man, marching with set purpose upon the road of God, whose heart beats in tune with the sufferings in every human breast, determined to share their sufferings or to sacrifice himself in the attempt to oppose all that oppresses them; such a character holds an appeal far greater than the cold star of truth towards which the pilgrim may be marching himself. It is good to live at a time when such men are born on earth, for their living testimony to the might of the human spirit restores to us courage and life, and gives us the strength to throw off the dead weight of the centuries.



BAPUJI (GANDHIJI)

By Nandalal Bose

DOLLS

By Abanindranath Tagore

We have dolls as playthings for children; marionettes for play-acting of larger size; life-size, and sometimes larger than life, caricatures, effigies and clowns. Toy dolls are about span high, thumb long, and smaller, down to miniature size.

Clay, wood, pith and paper are the materials of which our dolls are made. Toy dolls are first made in the rough by the potter or carpenter, whereupon the decorator steps in to do up the features and put in the colouring, before they finally find their way to the shops. The making of idols for worship is much on the same lines. The potter makes the figure according to tradition, with dress folds, ornaments, and crown, complete. The



decorator then adds the colouring of body, features and robes, the tinsel halo and other appurtenances. In the case of the play-acting marionettes, the carpenter makes the body and limbs separately, and the play-actor loosely fastens the limbs to the

body with strings, so that they may be moved as required. The dresser follows, colouring and



dressing them up, on the eve of the performance, for the parts they are intended to play. The animals

and birds that are to come on the stage are designed by the carpenter on a common pattern, and subsequently made up to suit the occasion,—the addition of mane or stripes, for instance, converting the same dummy into lion or tiger. This kind of co-operation between the several artists is made to serve all the purposes of the play.

There are mainly three kinds of dolls or toys: (1) Immobile—such as a figure of Ganesh, or a fat woman-figure with a stump in place of legs to be dressed up by the playing child.



(2) Partly mobile—such as palm-leaf sepoys with jointed arms and legs jerked into martial attitudes by strings attached to a bamboo spring; pith birds and fishes, dangling on strings from a supporting frame, swaying to the breeze. (3) Toys on wheels—such as

clay carts, wooden or metal horses; etc.



Whistling tin birds or squeaking celluloid babies are beyond the resources of our toy makers. Our marionettes go through their movements in obedience to the string-pulling of the play actor and do their squeaking by proxy through his assistant.

Our old doll types are no longer to be seen in all their variety; some have even changed their forms and decorations to suit modern taste. Some idea of the different kinds of dolls or toys that were in use may be gathered from our nursery rhymes. I give a few examples :



(1) The Moon Doll :—"Moon on her arms, moons on her feet, a moon on her forehead doth shine."

(2) The Car of Thirteen Spires :—"O look sister, how wonderful! the confectioner over the way has made a car with thirteen spires, and a monkey holding the banner."

(3) The Nodding Old Man :—"The aged one's head nods and nods, with a myna perched on top."

(4) Gopal (Krishna) :—"Who says Gopal is flat-faced ? I have brought clay from Sukhchar to make a straight nose for him. Who says Gopal is dark ? I have brought turmeric from Patna to make his complexion shine." etc.



(5) Animals :—"The Shy Cat", "The Royal Elephant", "The Black and White Cats of Shasthi", etc.

(6) There are the Smiling Doll, the Jolly Doll, the Merry Doll, the Crying Doll, and other descriptions the meanings of which cannot now be traced.

(7) A Queen Doll made of fire-wood is still to be seen in Kalighat shops.

The following portion of a fairy tale gives us a picture of the making of a doll queen.

"Four companions were going from one village to another. Dusk fell while they were passing through a wood before their journey's end, and they had to stay the night under a tree. The carpenter's son took the first watch. To while away the time he cut off a branch and carved a woman doll. The decorator's son took the second watch. He shaped the eyes and nose, gave golden colour to the body and rose colour to the palms and soles, and seated the naked doll under the tree. The weaver's son took the third watch and dressed her up, veil and all. The



king's son woke last, and in the fourth watch he chanted a magic spell, learnt from a holy man, which gave her life; then placing her in a palanquin, he took her away with him."

Kalidasa's drama called *The thirty-two Dolls* was evidently intended to be played with marionettes. The stage directions show that the dialogue had to be rendered by the play actor called "the speaker". The king sits on the throne with due pomp and circumstance. To him comes a magician, and invokes a super-human being, tall as a palmyra tree, with sword to match, who leads by the hand a beautiful maiden. Gods come on the scene, and engage in a terrific battle with demons, in the course of which the floor is strewn with headless trunks, whereupon all the dolls on the stage register different degrees of alarm; and so on.

Why should we not take a leaf out of Kalidasa's book and have our own marionette plays even to-day?



A DOLL FROM BENGAL

This (Pl. VII) is a typical wooden doll found all over Bengal. It varies in its decorations and colours in different districts but the form remains the same.

This particular one was bought in Kenduli in Birbhum District. The colour of the head, arms and feet is yellow. Upper garment covering the body below the waist is blue and green. The details and decorations of the figure are drawn with black and red thick brush lines.

Mr. Nandalal Bose says it is not possible for him to say when this toy was introduced in Bengal but the back of this toy resembles the back of the stone statues of Vishnu and other gods. He also feels that they somehow look like Egyptian Mummy cases.

Size of the original doll:— $10\frac{5}{8}$ " \times 3".



IS ART TWO OR ONE ?

By Surendranath Tagore

In following the recent pictorial art movements in Bengal, which have largely dominated those in other parts of India as well, we come across a divergence between two types of art, variously contrasted as Oriental and Occidental, symbolical and representational, or idealistic and realistic. This divergence tends to be accentuated by rival art institutions and their respective supporters, to the point of antagonism. Unfortunately but few attempts are made to penetrate to the original difference which takes these several forms, in order to see whether there is really any irreconcilable opposition between the two. I here offer my train of thought to those who enjoy excursions into such speculations.

What is the origin of the art impulse? The artist, I take it, receives some appealing message which moves him to communicate it,—a message that may come either as an idea requiring to be depicted, or as a ready-made picture embodying some idea. I dare not venture, just yet, beyond the adjective “appealing”, because “beautiful” does not always seem to fit the message as delivered even by acknowledged artists,—ugly-looking subjects not necessarily lacking appreciation; nor may “delightful” always be apposite, in view of the painful subjects sometimes portrayed.

Whence come these messages? Not always from the ordinary world in which man commonly lives and moves, the world of nature with which the physical sciences are concerned. For in this very life, man has his being in more than one world at a time, his conscious life not remaining confined to this one, but ranging over different levels, from the highest mystic state down to bestial depths, with all sorts of spiritualistic abnormalities and pathological oddities in between; and beings or events in any of such worlds may motivate the artist, to whose consciousness they present themselves, to become the instrument of their expression.

We need go no deeper for what seems to be a fundamental distinction to become apparent. It is the distinction between man's art-relations with the phenomenal world of Nature on the one hand, and on the other with those other worlds that are or may be variously called mystical, supernatural, subliminal, ecstatic, or sometimes perhaps hysteric. The type of art which is the outcome

of the former may be tentatively called mundane, and the other ultra-mundane, so long at least as the difference involved in the distinction seems to require separate naming.

In the case of mundane art, the artist has to do with a world of forms in a perpetual state of flux which he has, in the first instance, to capture in static shape (so far as the material, technique, and skill at his disposal permit) before he can proceed to deliver the message he has received, by a suitable employment of the elements,—form, colour, light and shade, composition, etc.—that serve as its language. Even by votaries of this type of art, however, the aesthetic value is no longer now-a-days supposed to depend on the accuracy of the copies thus made of natural objects as appearing to the human eye, but is conceded to lie in some subtle quality or effect over and above all that is portrayed.

In the case of the ultra-mundane type, from whichever of the other worlds the messages may be coming, they seem to have this much in common that their expression does not demand the portrayal of natural objects as seen; for we find in the resulting works of art, figurations that may not be like anything about us, or situations never met with in the sensible world,—such as angels with birds' wings, many-headed, multiple-armed divinities, tree-like forms resembling no earthly specimen, shadows lying where natural light would not have thrown them, compositions as a whole ignoring perspective and mechanics alike,—in obedience to some dictates of the message itself, not in accord with the laws of nature, nor even following any conscious purpose of the artist, though doubtless modified by his personality and limited by his technical equipment. But the significance of the message, transcending as it does the language in which it is delivered, is neither so modified nor limited, whence it may sometimes be more effectively explained by some third person better attuned to the world from which it comes, than by the artist himself through whom it was originally transmitted.

Already, I think, we have arrived at a better position to understand how the distinction between these two types of art happens to be so variously described.

Ever since India first received the impact of European culture, the westerner, as a rule (to which, however, there have always been notable exceptions) has been found to confine his attention, not only in his science, but in his philosophy and art

as well, to the world of Nature, so that the type of art we have called mundane tends to be thought of as Occidental. Similarly, though of late economic and other exigencies have driven it to concern itself more with the superficial world of appearances, the Indian mind is the inheritor of an age-long tradition of adventuring into higher levels of being; so that, whether or not present-day Indians succeed in actually reaching these levels, and although ultra-mundane influence is by no means unknown even in the modern West, yet art so influenced comes to be called Oriental.

Then again, in any type of art, natural objects may find a place for the sake of their own features, or as symbols of some idea; some animal, for instance, may be brought into a particular composition for the beauty of its shape or colour, or merely to show the ugliness of a sentient creature being used as beast of burden. But since ultra-mundane art can hardly be supposed to avail of earthly forms except as indicative of some extraneous idea, it exclusively appropriates the terms ideal or symbolical. While on the other hand, because those who abide mostly in the work-a-day world get into the habit of looking on its phenomena as the only realities, the art which employs representations of these as its language claims to be realistic, despite the fact that to those who are fortunate enough to come into touch with some better world, it is this fluctuating one which appears less real.

All these differences, however, thus set forth, are seen on the face of them to be unimportant, their perfunctory character being further brought out if we go into what is called the teaching of art. Teaching, in such case, can only mean providing the budding artist with the necessary technical equipment; that is to say, in an art school the student is merely taught to use the language of art,—the delineation of forms, the production of colour effects, the methods of composition, and the like. For this purpose, the copying of natural objects, or of old masters, may well afford useful training, irrespective of the type of art in which the student may eventually find his vocation.

What then becomes of the distinction which at the outset appeared fundamental? It is not at bottom a difference in man's art-relations, as at first seemed to be the case, but in the art-language employed, which, whether it consists of forms as seen to occur in nature, or of combinations of forms that do not so occur, equally fails of its object unless the transcending message gets to be ex-

pressed. And if the proof thus be in the result, it also matters little whether the artist was working out an idea received, or reproducing a vision seen. In neither case does the art message consist of the thing or things depicted, and in both cases the true artist appears to be reduced, for the time being, to the condition of a more or less passive medium, through whom the message itself selects the subtle elements needed for its own expression.

How the student can arrive at the point of giving to the art-language, as learnt by him, the essential æsthetic quality characteristic of artistry, is a problem no art school can solve. This much is certain that it cannot be done by any amount of intellectual theorising about art, or by the industrious viewing of all kinds of art works, or by the laborious copying of the very best of them. It is invariably a case of inspiration received by one who is fit.

The way to attain such fitness can be, and in some cases, doubtless, is shown by some Master. But how his personality communes with the personality of the adept pupil, and helps the latter to attune himself to receive and deliver art messages,—is that even known to the Master himself? It is, at all events, a mystery beyond our present scope to attempt to unveil. Suffice it to note here that it is this mysterious element, inherent in the essential æsthetic quality, that resolves the types of art, seemingly two, into one.

Having started from the standpoint of pictorial art, our progress, so far, has naturally been on the same line. I feel sure, however, that had our excursion been into the province of any other kind of art, even a flight into the etherial regions in which music finds its forms, the details of the views unfolded might have been different, but not so the conclusion towards which we have been tending. Before arriving there let us take a look at the question of art values which has, all this while, lurked in the background.

It goes without saying that all is not art that attempts or purports so to be. Good receivers are not necessarily efficient transmitters. Entanglement in the subject or language may prove a bar to the necessary transcendence, resulting in a picture that may be quite good as a record, or useful as scientific material, or meritorious as a display of skill, but nevertheless functionless as art. On the other hand, to transcend and yet fail to ascend; to take flight away from familiar ground, but fail to reach some lighted top; may lead to vain flitting amidst the dim regions of the odd, the whimsical, the bizarre, with products that may be

interesting, or amusing, or even thrilling, but still not of real value as Art. Lastly, as to messages from nether regions that exert a downward pull, their expression—if they at all need consideration—may be called inverted art, with negative values. Here we are concerned with that which is valuable art, not with its aberrations.

Our trend of thought now brings us to the point where we may assert with confidence that the value of a successful essay in Art is to be measured by its lifting power, be it the lifting of a chosen few to great illuminated heights, or of a larger multitude to summits which, if lower, are also heights with access to the light. Nor does the last difference indicate one of kind. An art message, once it has found expression, not only ceases to be restricted, as we have already noticed, by the limitations of the artist-medium, but is able to appeal to each beholder according to his capacity; the effective uplift thus being the resultant of the soaring pull of the message on the resisting drag of the recipient.

We may, at length, sum up our conclusions.

Art is the communication of messages, such as are not received through the senses, nor to be understood by process of reasoning; the receiving and transmitting artist being more or less of a passive medium. According to Western classical notion, such medium is born not made, though in art schools after the Western pattern, there is nevertheless supposed to be some virtue in the copying of works, whether of the Great Artist Himself, or of human Masters. Indian classic thought, for its part, looks upon the making of the artist (be the material he works upon, canvas, stone, or life itself) as consisting in a special orientation of his receptivity in respect of the source of inspiration, which turn may be given to his being by the combined effect of birth, self-culture, and favourable influences, and is capable of being helped on by mystic contact with one who has attained—the Guru or Master—who himself appears to act also as a passive medium. Both East and West, however, agree, whatever the process may be, that the value does not lie therein, but in the inspiration actually received. This inspiration, we conclude, thereupon contrives the delivery of its message, which, once delivered, is not dependent on the material language at the disposal of the medium, but is limited by the capacity of the recipient; so that the same message which takes the seer, the *rasika*, the connoisseur, to peaks of mystic realisation, may not do more than raise earth-bound souls to the top levels of their lower ranges.

Though not, like science, directly concerned with the sense impressions received from natural objects or events, art makes use as its language of their forms, colours, combinations or implications, only to rise free from them on the wings of its own message, incidentally carrying their evanescent beauty into luminous regions (or, conversely, throwing on them a supernal light) in which they become a joy for ever.

It is now clear that we need not, in the beginning, have fought shy of recognising beauty and joy to be essential qualities or concomitants of art. For a seemingly ugly subject is truly of art only when it draws us away from ugliness; an apparently painful subject when it reveals pain to be delusion. No message can really appeal to man unless its end be joy, the only finality, because, of all things, it alone is an end in itself. And wherever there is joy there also are light and beauty. Being in Joy is illuminated being. That which is seen in the light of Joy is Beauty.

What then, after all, does the activity or play, such as is alone worthy of the name of Art, consist in? Some one or something sends a message;—who or what except Soul rejoicing in light? What message?—None else but the joy of light and beauty communicated to Soul in darkness. And to what end?—again the lighting up of Soul to such partial realisation, as may be, of ineffable Bliss, the ultimate meaning of all that is. The sender, the message, the receiver; the wayfarer, the path, the goal;—are they, then, also One?

THE SIMILES OF DHARMADASA

By Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya

Candrakirtti (about 600-650 A. D.) was one of the great teachers of Buddhism. It is said that he was born in South India and showed remarkable intelligence in his infancy. He renounced the world and studied the whole of the *Tripitaka*. He also made a special study, with Kamala-buddhi, of the works of Nagarjuna; and became a teacher at Nalanda.

He wrote a number of works on the Madhyamika Philosophy. Among these works there are three commentaries on the following books of Nagarjuna:

1. *Madhyamakakarika* (मध्यमककारिका),
2. *Yuktisastika* (युक्तिषट्ठिका), and
3. *Sunyatasaptati* (शून्यतासप्तति).

The first book with its Tibetan version and Candrakirtti's *tika* (टीका) which is called *Prasannapada* (प्रसन्नपदा) is edited by Professor Poussin in the *Bibliotheca Buddhica*. His fourth commentary is on Aryadeva's *Catuhshataka* (चतुःशतक). The original as well as the commentary in Sanskrit could not yet be found in their entirety. In 1914 only some fragments of both of them were edited by the late Pandit Hara Prasad Shastri under the name *Catuhshatika* (चतुःशतिका) in the *Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (Vol. III, No. 8, pp. 449-574). In 1923 Dr. P. L. Vaidya edited the last nine chapters (VIII-XVI) containing the Tibetan version with the original or reconstructed Sanskrit, together with a French translation by him in a volume entitled *Etudes sur Aryadeva et son Catuhshataka*. Then in 1925 Prof. G. Tucci in *Revista degli Studi Orientali* (Vol. X, pp. 521 ff.) gave an Italian translation of the last eight chapters (IX-XXVI) from its Chinese version. In 1931 the present writer edited the last nine chapters (VIII-XVI) containing the original or reconstructed Sanskrit text, the Tibetan version, and copious extracts from the commentary by Candrakirtti.

Besides the works mentioned above Candrakirtti wrote another book, *Madhyamakavatara* (मध्यमकावतार). This is his independent and the most important work on the Madhyamika

system. Its original Sanskrit is not yet available, but there is a Tibetan translation which is edited in the *Bibliotheca Buddhica* and translated into French by Prof. Poussin in *Le Museon*, 1907, 1910.

The work was commented upon by Candrakirtti himself and he quoted it frequently in his commentary on the *Catuh-sataka*.

The first eight chapters of his commentary on the *Catuh-sataka* has a striking peculiarity which is not to be found in the last eight chapters, nor in his *Prasannapada*, the commentary on the *Madhyamkakarika*. This peculiarity lies in the frequent use of similes or *upamas* which are simple and charming and withal important in many respects. They are taken from life and nature, as well as from literature. Pandit Hara Prasad Shastri rightly observes (JASB, July, 1911, p. 434) that "they throw a flood of light on the manners and customs of the people and may contribute to the already rich folklore of India."

Of these similes Candrakirtti himself writes in his commentary on the *Catuh-sataka* (see the edition by the present writer, p. viii) that they were originally of one Acarya Dharmadasa. It is not yet decided who this Dharmadasa was. He may be identified with the author of *Vidagdhamukhamandana*, (विदग्धमुखमण्डन) who was a Buddhist.

As explained by Candrakirtti, some of these similes are collected here in the following pages, and it is hoped that they will be read with the popular maxims or apposite illustrations (*nyayas* न्याय) in Sanskrit as collected by Jacob in the *Laukika-nyayanjali* (लौकिकन्यायान्जलि) (Nirnayasagar Press, Bombay).

The references after the similes in Sanskrit are to the pages of the edition by Hara Prasad Shastri.

1.

कोकिलपोतवत् ॥ p. 456.

Like the young one of a cuckoo.

The hard metals, tin, lead, silver, gold, etc. may become liquid by contact with fire, yet this state of their being is not their own; so one's body, in spite of its being attended by things causing happiness, is never claimed by happiness as its own. As the young one of a cuckoo, brought up by a crow, belongs only

to the cuckoo and not to the crow, even so the body is not of happiness.

2.

अधिकृतहस्त्यारोपितदर्शनमन्युपरितोषवत् ॥ p. 465.

Like the Superintendent's anger and satisfaction at seeing an elephant driver.

A king made a person mount an unruly elephant and said: "Drive it". The driver was successful. The king was pleased and rewarded him with honours. The Superintendent, however, was sorry at seeing the honour done to the man, and was both frightened and depressed. Once the king made another man mount the same elephant and ordered: "Drive it". But the second man was inferior to the first man and could not drive the elephant. The king sentenced him to corporal punishment. The Superintendent was greatly pleased at it. Here the pain to the one, the Superintendent, was mental, and to the second, the inferior driver, corporal. It is the mental trouble of great ones that arises from disrespect to them, and it is the corporal trouble of the inferior ones which is caused by beating them.

3

सपत्नीपुत्रसत्कारदुःखितावत् ॥ p. 457.

Like a woman who is tormented by the honour gained by the son of her fellow-wife.

Among two fellow-wives one lost her son while the other continued to live with her own. Whenever the former saw that the son of her fellow-wife was being honoured (by the people) she grieved over it. When she was asked: "Are you lamenting over your dead son, who was so dear to you?", she answered: "No, I am not lamenting over my son. I lament because the son of my fellow-wife is living on." After some time the son of her fellow-wife fell ill, and she happened to go to another village. When she returned she saw a dead body being carried through the

village, seeing which she imagined that the very son of her fellow-wife was dead. As she was relishing this imaginary pleasure, she was stung by a scorpion and her pleasure which was fancied was replaced by the pain of poison.

Therefore, there is nothing stronger than (corporal) pain.

4

दीर्घाध्वगवत् ॥¹ p. 457.

Like a traveller bound for a long journey.

As the troubles of a traveller, bound for a long distance, daily become more and more acute, owing to fatigue and the exhaustion of food in the course of his journey, even so the more the average man lives the more he feels the suffering of old age.

¹ See No. 22.

5, 6.

(i) राजदुहितृस्वयंवरप्रार्थनावत् ॥

(ii) वैश्रवणदुहितृहरणमान्धातृवच्च ॥ p. 458.

(i) Like the desire of a princess to obtain her choice.

(ii) And like Mandhatr abducting Vaisravana's daughter.

Those who desire a princess, who is choosing her own consort, are afflicted, for she is the cause of pleasure to one man only and not to all. Many men desire, but all do not succeed; consequently they remain distressed.

In the same way, as regards living beings, the causes of misery are many, while those of happiness are only a few.

And as in the case of the king, Mandhatr, abducting the daughter of Vaisravana (Kubera), owing to the fact of both being powerful, far more misery is caused than happiness.

7

मान्धातृपतनध्व ॥ p. 458.

Like the fall of Mandhatr¹

¹ Details are wanting in the fragments.

81

. . . . p. 459.

A fortune-teller told a king: "It will rain and whosoever uses that water will become mad." The king for his own purpose got his well covered. It rained and his own people got mad having used the water. They all being of the same nature thought that they were all in their own natural state and it was the king himself who had gone mad. The king then had to use the same water which had been used by the people, lest the latter should laugh at him or drive him away. So if there be only one man diuretic he may be shunned like a leper, but when every man is diuretic what becomes of the notion of impurity?

In a country all the people were attacked with goitre (गलागड) and consequently they became extremely ugly. Now, there came a very beautiful man, but he was shunned by all as ugly and deformed.

1 The short Sanskrit line is wanting in the fragments.

9, 10

(i) घृतलिप्त बिडालनासिकास्वादवत् ॥

(ii) ५ धर्षणनासिकादर्शान्तुष्टिवच्च ॥ p. 459.

(i) Like a cat's tasting its nose which is smeared with clarified butter.

(ii) And like pleasure arising from seeing a golden nose.

When a man gives a hard lump of food to a cat which has its nose first anointed with clarified butter, the cat thinks that the lump is substantial. Again, when a man has no nose he is pleased at making and seeing an artificial golden nose. Similarly one, who has found a remedy for bodily impurity in flowers and such other things, feels a strong love for his body.

11

एकस्येष्टानिष्टदुहितृदर्शनवत् ॥ p. 460.

Like one seeing the daughter who was first cherished
and then not cherished.

There was a merchant and when a daughter was born to him, he went abroad and came back at another time. The daughter, then blossoming into maidenhood, was playing with other girls in an outside garden of the town. Seeing the girl he felt a strong desire for her, but when he heard that she was his own daughter he felt aversion for her. Even so there is nothing that invariably produces desire.

12

पिशाचीस्वभावदर्शनभीतवत् ॥ p. 460.

Like one frightened at seeing the nature of
a she-devil.

There was a man and he got a wife who was a she-devil. He was treating her as his wife, but when he saw her hideous and obstinate character which was creating his misfortune, he was frightened and cried: "She is not my wife ! she is a she-devil !" And no longer was he drawn to her.

In the same way when the wise see the nature of worldly things which are compounded (संस्कृत) they become indifferent to them. For it is said: "That which is compounded is not permanent, and that which is not permanent is not good; that which is not good is not bliss; and that which is not bliss is without soul (or nature)."

13

राजनटवत् ॥ p. 461.

Like the king's actor.

Just as the king's actor is at one moment a dancer, and then a king, and then a minister, a Brahmin, a householder, a slave, and so on; even so a king is never in a settled state, for he is to

act (different parts) on the stage (of the world) संसार) consisting of five states.¹

¹ There are five states of existence (*gati*) into which a being may be reborn after death. They are hell, the brute creation, the *preta* world, the world of men, and that of gods.

14

विश्वामित्रवशिष्ठजामदग्न्यवत् ॥ p. 462.

Like Visvamitra, Vasistha, and Jamadagnya.

[It is said in connection with this simile that a wise man should not follow all the practices of sages, nor are their scriptures authoritative; for there are three kinds of sages: inferior, intermediate, and superior. The above line has reference to the inferior class of sages.]

For we hear that Visvamitra committed theft and ate what was not to be eaten; Vasistha had illicit intercourse with a woman; and Jamadagnya killed living beings (men).¹

Visvamitra stole the flesh of a dog from Candalas (चण्डाल), Vasistha had intercourse with a Candala woman, named Aksamala, and Jamadagnya (= Parasuram) killed the king Kartavirya Arjuna and all the Ksatriyas on the earth twenty-one times.

¹. See No. 30.

15

अजितसेनराजपुत्रवत् ॥ p. 463.

Like Prince Ajitasena.

A certain king told his minister: "After my death you shall place on the throne my brother, Prince Ajitasena." When the king died, the minister took advantage of a little defect in the Prince and got him killed, and seized the kingdom for himself. He had ill fame in this world and was called "The Vicious One", and in the other world there was a great sin against his name. So how could there not be ill-fame and sin for those kings who strike down others, having little defects?

आमिरी श्वशुरशरीरदानवत् ॥ p. 464.

Like an Abhira woman's offering of her body
to her father-in-law.

An Abhira woman whose husband had gone abroad, used to treat her father-in-law very contemptuously. When the son came back, the old Abhira told him all about it, adding: "If your wife treats me again contemptuously I will not live in your house." The son, being devoted to his father and not afraid of his wife, rebuked her and said: "If you despise my father there shall be no room for you in my house. You must do for him even what is difficult to do and you must give him even what is difficult to give." She promised to do it and the son went away again. Then the woman in fear began to serve her father-in-law with the greatest care. During day-time she served him with the best kind of bath, toilet, ointments, garlands, food and drink, etc. At night, having washed his feet with hot water and besmeared them with oil, she took off her clothes and, thus naked, attempted to get into his bed. The old Abhira exclaimed: "Thou wicked woman! What hast thou begun to do!" Replied the Abhira woman: "I was told by my husband: 'you must do for him even what is difficult to do, you must give him even what is difficult to give.' And there is nothing more difficult to do or more difficult to give than this." The old Abhira said: "This is a stratagem for getting me out of the house. Well, be satisfied! I will never remain in this house!" Having said so, he came out. By this time the son returned and not seeing his father there asked his wife about him. She said: "Sir, nothing was left undone by me. I served him with the greatest care giving him bath, toilet, ointment, food, and such other things, which all pleased him in all seasons." Then she told him all that had happened. The husband scolded her and turned her out from the house. He then propitiated his father and brought him back to his own house.

As the wicked Abhira woman's offering of the body was not received with respect, even so the wicked kings' sacrifice of life in battle is not treated with respect.

(to be continued in the next Number)

THE SANTAL WOMAN

By Rabindranath Tagore

The Santal woman hurries up and down the gravelled path under the *shimool* tree; a coarse grey *sari* closely twines her slender limbs, dark and compact; its red border sweeping across the air with the flaming red magic of the *palash* flower.

Some absent-minded divine designer while fashioning a black bird with the stuff of the July cloud and the lightning flash must have improvised unawares this woman's form; her impulsive wings hidden within, her nimble steps uniting in them a woman's walk and a bird's flight.

With a few lacquer bangles on her exquisitely modelled arms and a basket full of loose earth on her head she flits across the gravel-red path under the *shimool* tree.

The lingering winter has finished its errand. The casual breath of the south is beginning to tease the austerity of the cold month. On the *himjhuri* branches the leaves are taking the golden tint of a rich decay. The ripe fruits are strewn over the *amlaki* grove where the rowdy boys crowd to pillage them. Swarms of dead leaves and dust are capering in a ghastly whirl following sudden caprices of the wind.

The building of my mud house has commenced and labourers are busy raising the walls. The distant whistle announces the passing of the train along the railway cutting, and the dingdong of the bell is heard from the neighbouring school.

I sit on my terrace watching the young woman toiling at her task hour after hour. My heart is touched with shame when I feel that the woman's service sacredly ordained for her loved ones, its dignity soiled by the market price, should have been robbed by me with the help of a few pieces of copper.

Santiniketan,
2 April, 1935.

(translated)



A SANTAL WOMAN

By Nandalal Bose

THE FUNCTION OF LITERATURE¹

By Rabindranath Tagore

The world outside us, when it enters into our consciousness, becomes quite another kind of world. Though its forms, colours, sounds and the rest remain, they become tinged with our approval and disapproval, our wonder and fear, our pleasure and pain; and thus variegated with the manifold qualities of our feelings, this world is wrought into one that is intimately our own. Those who lack a sufficiency of digestive juices cannot effectively convert their food into vital parts of their own body. And, similarly, those who are incapable of saturating the outside world with the solvent of their emotions, fail to transform it into their world—the world of man.

The last are inert people for whose hearts but little of the world is of living interest. They remain deprived of the greater part of the world into which they are born. With but few windows to their hearts and of small opening withal, they pass their lives as exiles in the very midst of the universe. There are, on the other hand, those fortunate ones whose faculties of wonder, love and imagination are ever wide-awake. For them every chamber of nature offers a standing invitation. The pulsations of the concourse of humanity evoke in the chords of their being sympathetic modulations. In them is the outer world verily created afresh, in vivified colour and form, through the mould of their feelings.

The world which is thus progressively growing within minds endowed with sensibility is, as I was saying, more man's own than is the outside world. Born of the heart, it is more readily accessible to man's heart. Enriched with the gifts of his mind, it has a special attraction for man's mind. Such world is not content with offering us the bare information that this is black and that is white, this is big and that is small, but sings to us in many a strain of what is desirable and what is disagreeable,

¹ This is the first of a series translated by Surendranath Tagore for *The Visva-Bharati Quarterly* from the original Bengali (*Sahitya*)—Ed.

what is lovely and what is repulsive, what is good and what is bad. This world of man flows on from mind to mind in an age-old current that is nevertheless always new, renewed from age to age by fresh senses and fresh hearts.

The question is, how is one to get hold of this world, by what means to keep hold of it? For unless it can be again projected outside in tangible form, it needs must be dissolved as it comes into being within us. But, having taken birth, this living world fain would be saved from such dissolution, and so it longs to be given objective permanence. Hence, through the ages, man's urge for literary expression.

In judging of literature two things have to be considered. First, how much of the universe the author's heart has been able to capture; and second, to how much of what he has thus gained the author has contrived to give abiding expression. Where both these aims are harmoniously attained, the result is more than good. But these two do not always achieve success together.

The wider the range of the literary artist's sensibility, the deeper the satisfaction he gives us, the vaster the world of man he helps to create as an ageless play-ground for all mankind. But skill in creative expression is also all important for literature. Even if the thing expressed be trivial, it does not follow that the art involved in its expression is also trivial; on the contrary, it remains as an acquisition to the language, cumulatively enhancing man's power of expression. To successful writers, accordingly, men pay their debt of homage by investing them with fame.

The question, therefore, becomes: How may outward expression be given to the world which the emotions of man create within him—an expression that must naturally be such as to preserve in itself these same emotions? For this it is necessary that language should take recourse to adornment.

The clothing of man, when engaged in his business, is simple; the simpler, the better it can be adapted to his purpose. Woman, on the other hand, in all civilised societies, has her finery and ornaments, her airs and graces, her numberless superfluities. For woman's business is concerned with the heart. She has to attract others' hearts, to bestow her own. This cannot be effectively done if she reduces her self-expression to its lowest terms. Man may appear just as he is: woman must make herself lovely. It is better for man, as a rule, to be frank and straightforward; woman cannot do without her reticences, her concealments, her suggestiveness.

Likewise must literature, in order to gain its object, put on ornaments—rhythm, simile, euphony; and avail of intimations and suggestions. Its language cannot, like the language of science and philosophy, afford to make a virtue of parsimony. For the expression of the formless through form, however, the utterance should leave room for the ineffable, which is in literature what grace and modesty are in women. It is incapable of attainment by imitation. It should not be overshadowed by the ornaments, but must be allowed to manifest itself through and beyond them.

In order to give scope to the unutterable within that which is uttered, language has to supplement the meaning of the words mainly with two other means of expression: pictures and music.

That which cannot be said in words may be told in pictures. There is no end of such picture-making in literature. Simile, metaphor, allegory,—all these are requisitioned to give pictorial form to the feelings that seek expression. Consider this line of Balaramdas: "The birds which are mine eyes hie to have sight of thee!" Is there anything here left untold? The yearning of the eyes could not have been put into mere words. It is only when they are pictured as birds in swift-winged flight that the agony of struggling expression is at once appeased.

The aid of music is as often invoked in literature by means of rhythmic and melodious arrangement of language. Where the words fail, this music takes up the burden: it makes the words poignant; meanings which, on a bare analysis, might seem but homely, are wafted to sublimity.

Thus of literature picture and music are the chief ingredients. Picture gives form to idea, music gives it movement. The picture is the body, the music is its life.

But man's heart is not the only thing that looks to literature for a permanent habitation. Man's nature is also a creation that cannot be directly apprehended by the senses, as is material nature. It does not keep still at man's bidding: of supreme interest for man though it be, there is no easy way of putting it on exhibition like a caged animal.

So literature further takes it on itself to project this variously elusive human nature from its place within, into lasting objective form. This is, indeed, a task of immense difficulty, for human nature is neither constant nor consistent: it is divided within itself, and is moreover comprised of many layers. Its deeper recesses are shy of intrusion. Its play is so subtle, so sudden,

that it defies analysis. So that, even to comprehend the whole of it within the heart, is given only to men of genius. Our Vyasas, our Valmikis, our Kalidasas have been doing this for us.

Now we may sum up in a word what there is to be said. Literature is concerned with man's emotions and man's character. But no, the last does not need separate mention. Rather should we say that the forms which both human nature and nature outside man are taking within man's heart, the tunes they are there singing,—the permanent reproduction of these in language is the function of literature. Literature would play to us over again the melodies breathed by the universe through the flute of our being.

Literature does not belong to any one in particular, not even to the author himself. It is a divine inspiration—divine because the poet marvels at his own production. As the outside world persistently works to manifest itself through its good and bad, its gains and imperfections, so also does this inspiration strive in every country, every age, every language, to find its way through our hearts into outside forms of everlasting joy.



TO A BUDDHA

By E. H. d'Alvis

Nay, do not mock me with those carven eyes :

I too might grow, beneath that gaze of thine,
Desireless, immortal, unerringly wise,
Disdaining human dreams. Lo, by thy shrine
A multitude slow-worshipping still goes
Unsandalled, bearing perfumed offerings,
While down the avenues of time still flows
The splendid pageant of all timeless things.

Nay, do not mock me with that ecstasy,

Born of a peace abstracted from life's pain :
Love and its futile dream shall trouble me
Too briefly—I shall find myself again ;
And look on thee unpassioned, mute, alone,
An agelessness invincible in stone.

NOTES ON ORNAMENTAL ART¹

By Nandalal Bose

What I understand by "ornamental work" includes such as: ornaments, carpets, *alpana* (floor decoration), embroidery, illumination, etc.; in short, where arrangement is the main feature.

These notes are merely suggestive, and might help a student to work better: in no case do they claim to teach one how to create.

By observing the various forms and movements in nature, I am pointing out the main features in a concise form.

Ornamental form has two aspects: one, the outward limitation of form, the other, its inward division (A & B).

The outward limitation of every form has its own particular inward movements (C). An artist, if he likes, can take the outward limitation from one form, and the inward division of the other, and combine the two (D).

These forms and movements being reduced to types have lost their variety. Anybody wishing to do new ornamental work will have to observe nature afresh for variety.

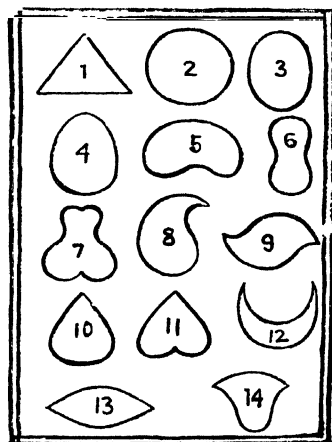
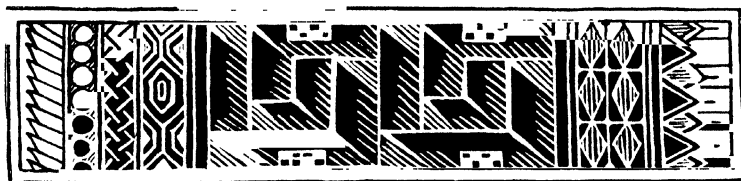
By the help of these abstract forms and movements, however, it will be easier to create and to understand the different types of ornamental work; the complexity in nature will be simplified and made clearer if one sees nature through such abstract forms.

The abstract forms of a betel leaf and a peepul leaf are almost the same, though each has its own peculiarity (E). The artist discovers clues to originality in such subtle distinctions. Otherwise too much concentration on mere types would make his work too intellectual and dry.

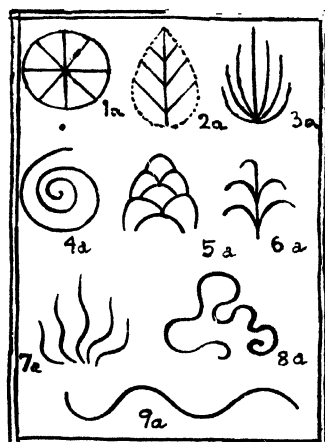
Here I am speaking mainly about form and movement and the gradation of light and shade, excluding colour. As colour has got an emotional value, we keep it for the next occasion to discuss.

Though ornamental work is mainly concerned with form and movement, there are two more factors to be considered: pause and balance.

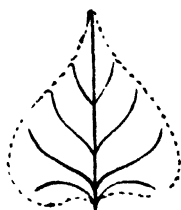
1. This is the first of a series on the same subject by the same author written for *The Isha-Bharati Quarterly*—Ed.



A



B



C



D



D



D



D





Spacing



Light & shade



Modulation of movement



A2 × B1a



A5 × B6a



A8 × B9a



B9a × 4a



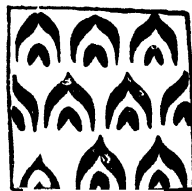
A3 × 4a



A10 × B2a



A14 × B3a



B5a

Pause includes spacing, light and shade, and modulation of movement (F). Without pause the ornamental work appears clumsy and monotonous. Sometimes the pause is replaced by space or it is made more distinct by modulation, i.e. making the movement either slow or rapid; and sometimes the pause itself is brought about by different variations of depth in light and shade.

The other factor, balance, can be attained easily by symmetry of form and the repetition of movement.* Spacing, light and shade, and the modulation of movement are useful in regular as well as in irregular design. But balance is the soul of irregular design (G).

In ornamental work if one can find the outward limitation of form then he can begin with the inward division. If the outward limitation is either missing or cannot be found then the artist can begin from the inward division and then proceed to adjust it to its outward limitation and thus make the work complete.

The ornamental design, as compared with nature, is far more simple and abstract. The character of the material should not be overlooked when doing ornamental work. Because the peculiarities of the material limit the artist's originality and give its appropriate quality to the work.

Here it is necessary to add another word. When doing ornamental work an artist's mind should always be alert as to the primary quality of the object that has inspired him; nor be led astray by his bias for its subsidiary characteristics.

THE SANTINIKETAN SCHOOL OF ART

By Benode Mukherjee

What is known as the Neo-Bengal or Tagore School of Modern Art¹ has undergone considerable change in the course of the last few years. This change is so directly related to Rabindranath's Institution at Santiniketan, in particular to the Arts Section of that Institution, that it is not possible to discuss the Art of Modern Bengal today without constantly referring to that centre of art-activity.

This new change, however, for which Santiniketan is to be held chiefly responsible, has not been either arbitrary or eccentric. It is, itself, to be traced to the earliest tradition of the Renaissance Movement in Indian Art, and has therefore to be understood in relation to that tradition.

Broadly speaking, it might be maintained that while the earlier group of artists led by Abanindranath Tagore looked for their inspiration chiefly to Mythology, History and ancient and contemporary literature, the impulses to the later group of artists have come from a different source.

The modern art movement in India may be said to have been inaugurated by the late E. B. Havell. Although this movement was intended to be primarily aesthetic, it could not help being nationalistic, in as much as a conscious and deliberate attempt had to be made to revivify Indian tradition. It was through the writings of that great Englishman that we were made aware of the vast significance of the Indian art and its ideal. And although Havell's own ideal of art got mixed up with the new vision he held up before Indians, the valuable service he rendered in releasing the art of our country from its caves and its museums was such that no Indian artist can be too grateful to him. But Havell, in explaining the ideal and the aesthetic enjoyment of this art, had necessarily to take the help of Indian religion and literature. It was this

¹ In using this terminology I do not mean to imply the superiority of any particular province or personality. I merely use a name which is convenient because current among artists since the time of Havell.



Pl. VIII

By Abanindranath

necessity—ideological rather than aesthetic—that explains the influence of literature on the pioneer group of our artists.

The pioneer genius who gave form, shape and character to this new ideal was Abanindranath Tagore. Even before Abanindranath came under the influence of Havell's guidance, his mind had been nourished in the atmosphere of the literary renaissance which had already swept over Bengal. In fact, the lyrical element in his art is to be traced to this influence. It was Abanindranath who first created the taste for our Indian Art. But, although undoubted master of its technique, he created through art what he felt through literature; so that the new art came to have a definite bias. This sort of interpretation of the ideal came in later times to stand as an obstacle. To Indians the ideal appeared as a mystic one. And the appeal to the past that it implied evoked an emotional response in them in which the aesthetic significance of the art (which Abanindranath had successfully cherished in his own art) was likely to be lost. In any case it was dangerous to attach art to a movement that was, in its nature, popular. Those were the days of the Swadeshi Movement when a definite patriotic complex was created in the minds of the people so that everything that could be called genuinely *Indian* came to possess a psychological value, not necessarily proportionate to its aesthetic significance. The movement launched by Havell and Abanindranath was easily carried along to success on the waves of this patriotic fervour. If we go through the discussions which the protagonists and critics of this art-revival had at that time, we can learn in what light this new movement was welcomed.

But there is no doubt that the exuberance of this Swadeshi Movement distorted the ideal with which Havell and Abanindranath had started. The ideal that was safe in the hands of a great genius like Abanindranath, when it passed to the hands of his followers and imitators, ceased to be aesthetic and became narrowly nationalistic. What began as a source of inspiration soon grew to be a worked-up complex that came in the way of any further progress of the Art. Even today we still hear the cry of some Bengali artists to make art properly national.

But Abanindranath's own genius had never ceased to be lyrical and individual. And to some of his pupils at least were transmitted the true impulses of that art. And Rabindranath Tagore, whose genius, more than anything else, had supplied the chief impulse and direction to the entire cultural renaissance of

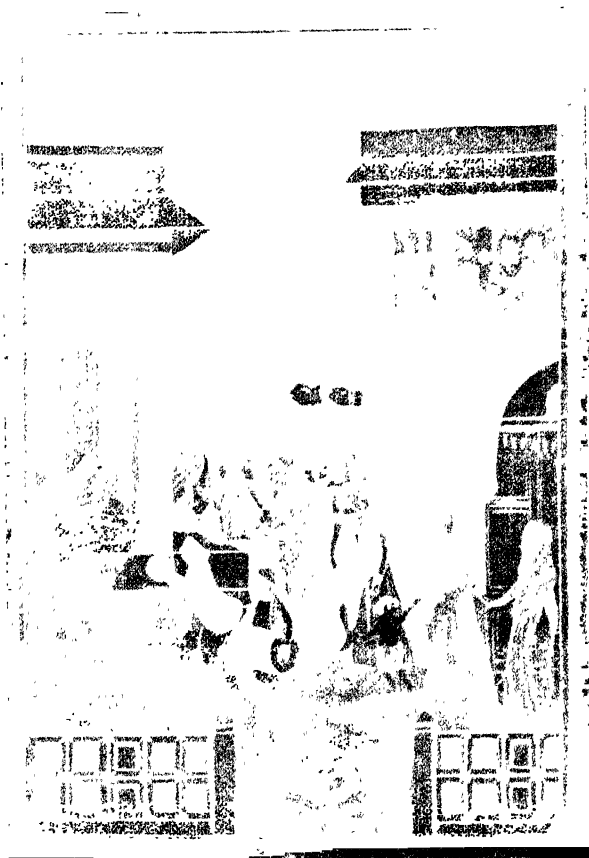
Bengal, kept on insisting that art, before everything else, should be *true*. He emphasised its cultural and educational value; and to provide for such scope he started the Kala-Bhavan (Art School) at Santiniketan, to be run under the guidance of Nandalal Bose and Asit Kumar Haldar. (The latter soon after left.)

Nandalal was, of course, Abanindranath's student and still worked under the influence of the latter's genius. But, fortunately, those few students who came under his charge had had no previous academic or traditional education. This freedom from trained bias, combined with the influence of the personality of the great Poet and the atmosphere of the place, brought them into an intimacy with Nature which was henceforth to be the moulding influence on this group of artists. Not literary tradition but life and nature supplied the theme and the motive force. This change, happily, did not come as a morbid reaction against the older school of art, for Nandalal himself was responding to it and was therefore in a mood and in a position to direct it.

In this new atmosphere, in direct contact with nature, the art of this school began to grow rapidly. It was freed from the spell of literature and brought in the midst of life. And as this new experience demanded new material for its expression, changes had to be made in the old technique.

Till this time the technique of our artists was the one they had taken from Abanindranath who had evolved it for himself. Abanindranath had begun his training under European artists. Later on Havell brought him in touch with the Indian ideal of art and, in particular, the Moghul form of it. It was chiefly under the influence of the Moghul technique on his European training that his first style was developed (see Pl. VIII). Later, again, under the influence of the Japanese art, he adopted certain of the mannerisms of that art, which were particularly suited to his genius. This style evolved into the one that we now know as characteristically Abanindranathian (see Pl. IX).

It was this style that was at first taken up by the Kala-Bhavan students, for it came to them naturally through Nandalal who had been trained in it. But it could not stay as a permanent influence because Nandalal himself had never been finally confirmed in it, his individual genius having taken a somewhat different bias (see Pl. X). Mythology had been the dominating influence on his imagination in his early age; and this naturally made him susceptible to the fascination of the traditional Indian



Pl. IX.

By Abanindranath Tagore

art, particularly, sculpture. This influence has not only been the most effective in his work, but also the most lasting. It is clearly marked in his creations, much more so than in those of Abanindranath; for this reason, that whilst to the latter it came as a later influence, on Nandalal it had grown as the earliest, and therefore the most potent, influence. Moreover, Nandalal came of a class to which tradition had always been more real than the classics.

It was under these conditions that the new school of art at Santiniketan began its adventurous career. Through Nandalal the students inherited Abanindranath's technique, though in a form so liberal that it left them free to continue experiments with style. And since art at Santiniketan was fostered by Rabindranath not as a national activity which carried patriotic value but as an educational and cultural necessity for the complete individual, opportunity was provided to the artists of the study and understanding of the European and other schools of art and their modern developments; in particular, the admirable analyses of those schools of art by modern European critics. Such comparative study has a natural result of broadening the student's intellectual outlook. This, of course, does not mean that the artists began to look for inspiration abroad; it only means that they were freed from forced fidelity to any particular charmed ideal. The individual was free to choose and accept for himself what ideal suited his genius and his temperament best. This freedom of experiment was generously encouraged by Nandalal in his students; in fact, it has been a consistent principle in his practice of education to leave the individuality of his student as free as possible.

It was no doubt inevitable that such practice should lead to several combinations of styles, not always happy. But there is no need to lament that this irresponsible freedom has destroyed the purity of the national ideal in art; because this purity was not lost without a compensatory gain in strength, even if it be the strength of ruggedness. Nor has this experimenting been meaningless, for a new and definite trend is discoverable in this group of artists, which has little kinship with either the old or contemporary traditions—Ajanta, Moghul or Rajput. At this time it is not possible to discuss this new trend of thought, though it is necessary to say something more as to how this change occurred.

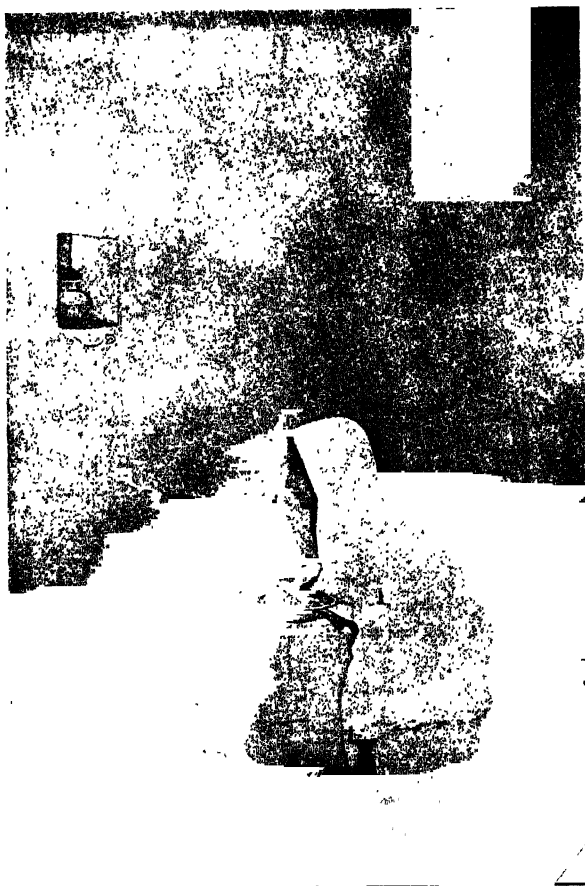
Nandalal came to Santiniketan with a mind well equipped with knowledge of the Indian Classical Art. And although his inspira-

tion remained his own, his ideal has never ceased to be the old Indian conception of form. When the younger group of Kala-Bhavan artists were struggling to find their way and took hold of anything they came against, Nandalal's conception of form stood before them as an ideal. And whilst they strove to free themselves of one tradition, namely that of art moulded under literary influence, they found it necessary to take stand on another tradition, which was near at hand in the training of Nandalal. The conception of the Indian traditional and classical art, which they began to appreciate through the new education, made their understanding of Egyptian, Chinese, and Persian Arts easy.

But the real influence on Nandalal Bose himself has come from a different source. When an artist begins to give form to his experience he discovers that the material on which he has to work is both the way of his work and the obstacle to its perfect freedom. He has, therefore, perforce to some extent, to accept the limitations of his material. But there is an ideal of art which consciously strives to *overcome* this obstacle. There is, however, another ideal of art which *consciously accepts* the limitations of the material and its possibilities. This second ideal may be said to be generally true of decorative art. And as Nandalal's art has marked decorative tendencies, he has evolved a regular discipline for this ideal of adaptation.

Painting was, hitherto, more or less, the only medium of expression for the artists of Bengal. Training under Nandalal Bose, however, roused a desire in his students to experiment with other mediums and discover the proper material for the genius of each; with the result that today artists at Santiniketan find many types of expression open to them and their diverse talents have not to be forced through the same medium. It is not necessary to deal with this point in detail in this paper.

If we critically study the work of our younger artists we shall find that along with that of Abanindranath, the Moghul influence is definitely on the decline with them, whilst the Chinese, Persian, etc. elements are discovering themselves more and more. We seem to be going away from the Bengal school, although at the same time becoming more oriental. The same mentality is at work which makes modern European works seem Oriental. But the greatest single influence responsible for this change is the discipline of decorative art. For this, as for several other things, Nandalal and his students have reason to be grateful to Santiniketan. For



Pl. X.

By Nandalal Bose



Pl. XI.

By Nandalal Bose

it is Santiniketan, with its ceremonies, its seasonal festivals and periodic dramatic performances, that has provided the necessary scope for this side of his genius. Here art is sustained not only for its own sake but also as part of the social life, a fact which has proved particularly stimulating to a temperament like that of Nandalal's.

In this respect, Abanindranath was less fortunate in his surroundings, although he it was who first realised the value of art-activity in social life. His is the first book in Bengali on *Alpanas* (floor-decorations). He was also the first great mind to perceive the significance of dolls and toys and such other humble objects of folk-fancy and common delight. He has always insisted that people should decorate their daily lives by simple indigenous folk-arts and not employ professional artists to "fancy" for them. But he himself could not get sufficient scope for this activity, although in this respect, as in the respect of Indian art in general, he deserves the credit of having first created the taste for it. It was left to his great disciple to justify the faith of his master.

From this brief survey it will be clear that the influence of Nature at Santiniketan, the guidance of Nandalal which left each student free to pursue the particular bent of his talent while providing him with a variety of mediums, and the ideal of Form that he held out before them, were the chief factors in creating the new departure in the art of modern Bengal, which is associated with the name of Santiniketan. It cannot be said that it was the personality of Nandalal Bose alone which has worked this change, although that personality has undoubtedly meant much. Santiniketan itself has contributed the opportunity and the atmosphere. And, above all, the subtle, indefinable influence of the creator of Santiniketan—Rabindranath—may not be overlooked.

A NOTABLE BOOK ON HINDUSTHANI MUSIC

By Hemendra Lal Roy

A Treatise on the Music of Hindoostan (pp. 117) was printed at the Baptist Mission Press, Circular Road, Calcutta, in 1834.¹ It was written by Captain N. Augustus Willard, who, it appears from the title-page, was an officer commanding in the "Service of H. H. the Nawab of Banda." More about him we do not know. This is the earliest systematic treatise on Hindusthani music and is delightful reading even after the lapse of a century. The data were collected largely from professional musicians. Capt. Willard says in the Preface: "I have not confined myself to the details in books, but have also consulted the most famous performers, both Hindoos and Moosulmans, the first Veenkars in India, the more expert musicians of Lukhnow." As this is the first recorded and systematised statement of information received from musicians, eminent research scholars in music, like the late Mr. K. Banerjee of Bengal and Mr. V. N. Bhatkhande of Bombay, have drawn both inspiration and material from this source. (This book, however, does not find mention in the bibliographies supplied by Mr. Fox Strangways and Rev. Popley in their books on Indian music.)

The great merit of the book, as it seems to an Indian musician, lies in the fact that the approach to the subject of Hindusthani music chosen by Capt. Willard was Indian and, as such, intelligible to Indians. This view-point was all along kept up in the book, though the range of treatment was by no means narrow and restricted, as may be seen from the author's summary of the contents:—"The similarity of the music of Egypt and Greece to that of this country has been traced and pointed out; harmony and melody have been compared; and time noticed. The varieties of song have been enumerated, and the character of each detailed; a brief account of the principal musicians super-added, and the work concluded with a short alphabetical glossary of the most useful musical terms."

¹ The Visva-Bharati Library possesses a copy of this rare book.

The author seems to have been a cultured, well-read man, thoroughly at home in Hindusthani; and, judging from his treatment of the technical portion of the subject, had stayed long in India and taken pains to discuss and understand the details supplied by the musicians. In this short notice of the book—a book long out of print—it is neither possible nor profitable to launch into a technical discussion. It may suffice here to present a few principal trends of thought which may be of general interest.

First it is asked: Who is entitled to have an authoritative say on matters musical? The scholar or the musician? Capt. Willard sides with the latter and says: "When from the theory of music, a defection took place of its practice, and men of learning confined themselves exclusively to the former, while the latter branch was abandoned entirely to the illiterate, all attempts to elucidate music from rules laid down in books, a science incapable of explanation by mere words, became idle. This is the reason why even so able and eminent an orientalist as Sir William Jones has failed. Sir William Jones, it seems, confined his search to that phoenix, a learned Pundit, who might likewise be a musician; but I believe such a person does not exist in Hindoostan." Capt. Willard was wise in siding with the musicians in this pundit-professional controversy but the remarks were uncharitable where Sir William Jones was concerned, for the latter did try to have his conclusions verified by professionals. A casual glance at his article *On the Musical Modes of the Hindus*, written in 1784, will convince anybody of the earnest search after truth by Sir W. Jones from pundits and professionals alike. This much, however, might be surmised that Sir W. Jones had not sufficient leisure to devote to the subject.

It is evident, on the other hand, from the writings of Capt. Willard that he had no means of checking the data collected from professionals, in the light of the Sanskrit treatises on the subject. He discusses notes, scales, time-measures, the *ragas* and their classification, and the various types of composition. We find that though the professional equipment of technical terms was not inconsiderable, the meanings and spellings in certain places were corrupt. But this is in some respects to our advantage. We get almost intact the lore of musical knowledge existing among the professionals in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. We can see the musicians formed a good working hypothesis out of

the fragments they gleaned from Sanskrit texts and we, who may read the treatises today, find very little to add, and vainly search for Sanskrit equivalents for some Hindi technical terms in use among musicians. Nevertheless, much labour still awaits the scholar who would master music on its theoretical side. Past theory lags painfully behind present-day practice of Hindusthani music and the theory of music suffers in India from big gaps which prevent these fragments from being unified and co-ordinated into a single whole.

Capt. Willard's admiration of the Hindusthani system is expressed in many places. Referring to those who fail to see any beauty in Hindusthani music, he says: "If by Hindoostanee music is meant that medley of confusion and noise which consists of drums of different sorts, and perhaps a fife—if the assertion be made by such as have heard these only, I admit the assertion in its full extent; but if it be so asserted of all Hindoostanee music, or of all the beauties which it possesses or is susceptible of, I deny the charge. The prepossession might arise from one or more of the following causes; first, ignorance, in which I include the not having had opportunities of hearing the best performers. Secondly, natural prepossession against Hindoostani music. Thirdly, inattention to its beauties from the second motive or otherwise. Fourthly, incapacity of comprehension. It is probably not infrequent that all these causes concur to produce the effect."

In discussing melody and harmony it is remarkable how singularly free he was from the bias that harmonic music is essentially and absolutely superior to the melodic variety. He speaks a good deal in favour of melody, though he remarks once: "There is no doubt that harmony is a refinement on melody." Such judgments were not unusual in 1834 and might have been excused then; but they sound too odd and out of place when one finds Mr. Tovey, a reputed music critic, writing under *Music* in the 14th edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*: "Moreover, folk-music, together with the present music of barbarous races and Oriental civilizations, can give us materials such as anthropology uses in reconstructing the past from its vestiges in the present. . . . When we trace the slow and difficult evolution of our harmonic system we cease to wonder that it was not evolved sooner and elsewhere, and we learn to revere the miracle that it was evolved at all." Those who pass judgments so glibly on Hindusthani music ought at least to know that Hindusthani music has never remained stationary at

any period of its history and the anthropologist will have to tackle a very complex music before he consigns it to prehistoric ages. It is not good logic to say that because melody has remained melody and has developed richer and more complex varieties instead of becoming harmony, it must needs be inferior to harmony. The truth is that there is no inevitability in melody for its developing into harmony and the present so-called European melody is leagues away from melody in the oriental sense. Harmony took an entirely different direction in evolving, but for that reason nobody denies its worth or beauty.

Then we pass on to a discussion "Of the peculiarities of manners and customs in Hindoostan to which allusions are made in their songs." Capt. Willard says: "In Hindoostan the fair sex are the first to woo, and the man yields after much courting. In compositions of this country, therefore, love and desire, hope and despair, and in short every demonstration of the tender passion, is first felt in the female bosom, and evinced by her pathetic exclamations."¹

In the last chapter the author deplores the decline of music and attributes it to the progress of the theory being arrested after the Hindu period. The practice, however, continued until the time of Muhammad Shah and contributed to the entertainment of nobles and princes.

The fact may be correct; but the conclusion supposed to be based on them: that there was a natural connection between the conditions prevailing in the Hindu period of Indian history and the progress of music and a corresponding antipathy between those prevailing in the Moslem period and that progress, is one which need not be accepted. In fact, whether there is any necessary relationship between the development of any art and a particular set of social and political environments is a question that still baffles, and will probably continue to baffle, all students of sociology.

¹ In so far as this assertion has any truth at all, it should be confined to symbolic poetry, inspired by the idylls of Sri Krishna—Ed.

THE INTELLECTUAL

By K. R. Kripalani

There are among young men today many who will relish no compliment so much, as being called "intellectuals". This particular susceptibility may be due partly to this "pose" having become a fashion, and partly because very few have any clear idea of what it means, being an intellectual.

In discussing the nature of a real intellectual, we need not let our enquiry be distorted by reflections on long, unkempt hair, or shabby garments, or shabby habits in general. Every pose must have its masquerade. An intellectual may or may not look "shabby"; just as a saint may or may not look "pitiful", or a poet may or may not look "far away". But that is by the way.

To begin with, it will do intellectuals good to remember that an intellectual, even a genuine intellectual, may not necessarily command a better or a sharper intellect than those who do not aspire to achieve that distinction. For an intellectual is not necessarily one who has a finer intellect than others but one who, whatever his cerebral equipment, believes in it alone and aims at living through it, repudiating more or less the validity of the rest of the make-up of his being. A Newton or an Einstein may command an amazingly curious and accurate intellect but if he restricts its use to the investigation of physical or any other phenomena, and is content *not* to relate its operations there to the basis of his everyday faith, thought, feeling, and activity, he could not be deified or maligned as an intellectual.

Nor is the "intellectual" attitude the same as the "scientific" attitude. It would become so if the scientific analysis of the physical basis of a phenomenon exhausted for us all its value, so that the understanding of an object set the limit to our enjoyment of it. If, whilst understanding the physical cause of the rainbow, I nevertheless let myself go over the wonder of its beauty and was content to accept this joy as a sufficient testimony of its value to me as a human being, I will not have ceased to be "scientific", but I will have swerved from the stern path of a pure intellectual (if such a complete distortion ever exists): for not to enjoy except

through understanding must be his creed. I must ever observe and watch and judge, and, if need be, smile and, perhaps, sneer. For each single phenomenon, observed in isolation, can be reduced to very simple causes, so that nothing is really worthy of our admiration, much less of a complete abandon of our personality to its relish.

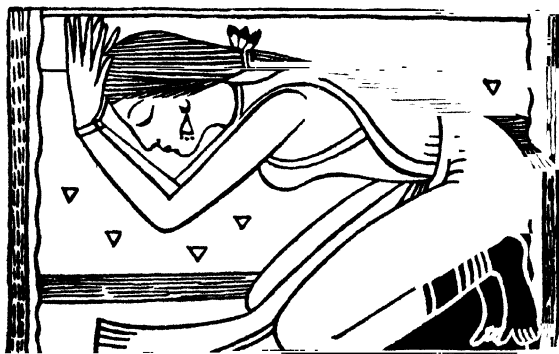
A true intellectual is, therefore, an outsider to life and to himself. He breaks the simplicity of his personality and creates a division within himself and so *wills* the mode of his being that an effective imperialism is established within him of his intellect over the rest of his make-up. He does not deny his senses and his desires—in fact, the modern intellectual indulges them a little too aggressively—but he lets them have their way only under the impudent gaze of the imp of intellect, with the result that, although each member of his make-up is indulged and satisfied, he himself is never fulfilled. For fulfilment is a function of the wholeness of our personality.

We love, but there is always the imp in us watching our madness from the outside and winking at our folly, so that we are continually being thwarted in the overflow of our being, and continually being made to feel ashamed of our rapture. Suddenly in the fullness of love's embrace the imp withdraws itself from the blissful lover and whispers: "Fool, mark the gaspings of the heated lungs and the ridiculous gymnastics of these haunches and these buttocks. Some mischievous sperm has made a fool of you." And the overflow of life appears a waste and what might have ended as a pure rapture gives way to a sense of humiliation, mixed with disgust.

We are overtaken by a noble urge and feel a passionate desire to identify ourselves with the wrongs of the common, persecuted humanity, and we stretch our hands, when the whisper comes: "Fool, mark that rabble. Can't you perceive their chattering and their ape-like imbecilities!" We feel like covering our eyes and slinking away—but where?

A genuine intellectual is, therefore, a most pathetic and unenviable phenomenon. He strives to stand on the only foundation that appears sound, and reduces life to one vast *reductio ad absurdum*. Having reduced life to a futility, he cannot get away from his own. He cannot abolish his sensibility: he can only defeat it and so frustrate himself. If life appeared an unredeemed tragedy to him, he might yet die with a sense of sublimity. But he feels in

a state of perpetual bathos. He is too honest to deceive himself and too proud to beg a refuge. He pursues his path until he staggers to its relentless limit where the path is lost in the parched sands of an endless desert. If a last streak of noble sensibility lingers in him, like Turgenev's Nezhdanov, he takes up a pistol and, pointing it against the treacherous and yet beloved brain, pronounces himself "unfit", amid the fatal blaze of gun-powder.



GANAPATI *

BY HARIDAS MITRA

SECTION 6.

As Gaṇeśa was perhaps originally the special deity of the *Gaṇas*—wild Aryan tribes, inhabiting desert wastes, mountains and forests¹, he was probably in later times affiliated to *Paśupati* (*Śaṅkara*) and *Bhūtapati* (*Śiva*)²; and when he was admitted to the higher Aryan pantheon, various descriptions of his origin were given in the *Purāṇas*³, as necessity arose. These explanations might have taken centuries to grow.

These elements might have been the accretions or accumulations due to organic growth of the conceptions themselves or the explanations of these elements might have been the results of conscious attempts keeping pace with such development. In any case, it is impossible, at this stage, to determine which of these various factors were present and to find out their mutual relationship, as also the exact ways in which they worked.

The mythological accounts in the *Purāṇas* etc., of Gaṇeśa's origin or birth are extremely confusing. According to the *Liṅga Purāṇa*, he is considered to have been born as a part (*aṁśa*) of Śiva out of *Pārvatī*'s womb. He is also said to have been fashioned by *Pārvatī* herself out of her toilet preparations and bodily impurities according to the *Śiva*, *Matsya*, and *Skanda Purāṇas*, or from a mass of turmeric paste according to *Nāradaṣaṅkarātra*. According to the S. Indian version of *Suprabhedāgama*, Gaṇeśa was born of Śiva and *Pārvatī*, who assumed the form of elephants to enjoy themselves, and had thus the face of an elephant. According to *Varāha Purāṇa*, Gaṇeśa sprang into existence from Śiva's

* The first five Sections have already appeared in the *First Series* of the *Viśva-Bharatī Quarterly* (Vol. 8, Part IV, 1931-32).—Editor.

1. Compare, also *Gaṇapatiyatharva-Śr̥ṣam* (*Anandāśram Skt. Series*, Poona).

॥१०॥ ननो ब्रातपतये ननो गणपतये नमः प्रमथपतये नमस्तोस्तु लब्धोदरायैकदन्ताय विघ्ननाशिने शिवसुताय वरदमूर्तये नमः

2. These are two appellations of Rudra, actually occurring in *Atharva Veda*. (XI. 2. 1.).

3. For *Paurāṇik* myths about Gaṇeśa's origin, see :—

(a) Gopinatha Rao : *El. Hind. Ic.* under Gaṇeśa,

(b) also, Carucandra Bandyopadhyaya : *Gaṇeśa Thākurer ṭhikuṇi. Pravāsi*. 1927 B.S. Vol. 20, Part I, pp. 25 ff.

(c) C. C. Bandyopadhyaya : *Kavikāṅkan-Caṇḍī. Caṇḍī-Maṅgala-bodhini*, Part I. (Cal. Univ., 1924-25). *Gaṇeśa-vandanā*, pp. 1-17,

splendour of countenance, which represents his *ākāśika* portions. As he was too captivating to behold, Pārvatī angrily cursed him to assume an elephant's head and a large belly so that all his beauties might vanish. In the *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa*, it is stated that Gaṇeśa was originally Kṛṣṇa himself, in the human form.⁴ Sani went to see him while a child. The head of the child consequently separated and went away to Goloka. The head of an elephant (Airāvata's young son) in the forest was then removed and engrafted to the body of the child. In *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* and *R̥gveda*, Gaṇapati is identified, or confused with Brahman, Brahmanaspati or Brhaspati who is, of course, the Vedic God of wisdom and is called the sage of sages. According to *Brahmaṇḍa Purāṇa*, Gaṇeśa lost a tooth in a fight with Paraśurāma.

The striking intelligence and sagacity of the elephant seem to have acted in a reflex way towards the further growth of the Gaṇeśa story. In the *Siva Purāṇa*, the account is given of Gaṇeśa's marriage⁵ with two fair damsels named Buddhi and Siddhi; or, he is sometimes associated with the *Aṣṭa-Siddhis*. These accounts probably show that Gaṇeśa was simply the lord of wisdom and attainment of desired ends.

The well-known myth of the *Mahābhārata*⁶ of Gaṇeśa writing out that epic at Vyāsa's dictation, using his own broken tusk as a stylus, is certainly a later addition. Gaṇeśa had then already attained the position of a scholar like Brhaspati among the Gods. Not only that, Gaṇeśa is described as having played on the *mṛdaṅga*⁷ in the celestial choir when

4. Gaṇeśa is also found sometimes represented with Viṣṇu's weapons. This seems only to betray an attempt on the part of the Vaiṣṇavas to make a connection with Gaṇeśa who was becoming increasingly popular, with Viṣṇu.

5. At the time of the worship of Durgā, Gaṇeśa is also associated in Bengal, with a *Kālā Bau*—‘plantain-tree wife’, which is really the *Nava-patrikā*, the nine sacred plants—each of which represents an aspect of the Devī. But in early Bengal sculpture [vide *Catalogue of the Museum of the Varendra Research Society*, (Rajshahi,

Bengal, 1919); illustration of Gaṇeśa and Plantain tree in Caṇḍī Image No. $\frac{D(a)1}{11}$]

Gaṇeśa was sometimes represented beside the plantain tree. The drooping and the rustling leaves of the plant and its swaying movement possibly suggested a coy and veiled (Bengalee) girl wife of the plantain species with a pair of *vilba* fruits for her bust. Also, the fondness of the elephant for the fruit and the juicy stem of plantain seems to have again acted in a reflex way, for the growth of the belief and might have, later, led to the transformation.

6. M. Winternitz: *Gaṇeśa in the Mahābhārata*. JRAS, 1898.

7. The *Mṛdaṅgika*-s or the players on the *Mṛdaṅga*, hold Gaṇeśa in special veneration. Sometimes, the experts among of them mutter the technical terms of the *Tāla*-s, as they play on the *mṛdaṅga* and also dance in unison.

Compare the following śloka in *Sadāśiva-prokṭa Gaṇeśaśṭaka*

सरज्जैनचयिदकानिनादनूपुरखने:

खदकतामनादमेदसाधनानुपपत: ।

यिनिहिमिततोऽक्तोक्थयेयिथेयिखदतो

विनायक: ब्रह्माक्षेत्रायतो प्रदक्षति ॥

Gaṇeśa may be looked upon as the guardian deity of all musicians who play upon skinned instruments—the *Anaddha*. For the sake of auspiciousness, and also



MAHA-GANAPATI (From Behar)

British Museum.

Mahādeva danced in an ecstasy of joy before Viṣṇu, and when Gaṅgā was born. Gaṇeśa had then simply and absolutely become the male prototype, and the counterpart or reflexion of Sarasvatī—the consort of Brahmap, and the presiding Deity of Indian liberal Arts and Sciences.

Gaṇeśa and all his *gaṇas* were regarded as Brahmacāriṇs originally, in keeping with their character as followers of Lord Śiva who was a *yogin* and a *brahmacāriṇ*. Many of these *gaṇas* had, like Gaṇeśa, animal heads or deformed bodies, while others practised severe penances. Many of these *gaṇas* closely approximated to Lord Śiva, in appearance and modes of life, thus attaining *sārūpya-siddhi*; and seemed to have represented different aspects of Lord Śiva. Thus Nandin, as the name implies, probably represented Lord Śiva's aspect of blissfulness and auspiciousness (*ānanda-mūrti* and *maṅgala-svarūpa*). While the skeleton Bhṛṅgin showed Lord Śiva's aspect as penance-maker *mahāyogin*; and Mahākāla stood for Lord Śiva's destructive power, *saṃhāraśakti*.

The attempt on the part of the Brāhmaṇists and the Buddhists to associate Gaṇeśa with a consort or a Śakti⁸ must be regarded as later developments.

to show off their skill, the *mṛdaṅga* experts sometimes recite a *dhyaṇa* of Gaṇeśa and follow it up, with their instruments e.g. the most favourite one among these *dhyaṇas* is

ॐ ध्यायेत् सिन्दूरवर्णे खर्वाङ्गतिं खूषतनुं गजेन्द्रवदनं सन्मीदने सुन्दरं—

In contradistinction to and by way of analogy with the musical *tāla*-s associated with Brahmap and Rudra, *Brahma-tāla*, *Rudra-tāla*, we also have, as I gather from some Indian masters of music, similar *paraṇa*-s associated with Gaṇeśa viz. *Kakubha-paraṇa*, *Gaja-paraṇa*, and *Gaṇeśa-paraṇa*.

8. See Section 7. Note 11. *Infra*,

NOTES ON LALA AND PANDITA

By NAGENDRA NARAYAN CHAUDHURI, M.A., Ph.D.

There are some words in Sanskrit which have not yet been satisfactorily explained ; and there is a still larger number of words which have been introduced into Sanskrit from various extraneous sources and the derivations which the Sanskrit lexicographers have attributed to them are very fanciful and far-fetched. Two of such I am tempted to record below with suitable derivatives, appropriate to their meanings.

1. *lālā* (saliva), Bengali, *nāl* or *lāl*—This is not a genuine Sanskrit word and is not traceable in the Vedic speech. This word occurs in later classical Sanskrit. There can be no doubt that it has come from the Dravidian word *nālūka*. In Telegu *nālūka* means tongue.

2. *paṇḍita* (wise, learned, a learned man, a scholar)—Sanskrit lexicographers derive it from *paṇḍā* (wisdom, knowledge) and *itac* (a suffix). *paṇḍā* as a word to signify 'wisdom' or 'knowledge' was unknown not only in the Vedic speech, but also in very old classical Sanskrit. It seems to be derived from the Tamil root *paṇḍu*, the meaning of which is 'to be accomplished, ancient, old, to be ripe, etc.' In Sanskrit a learned man is also called *vṛddha* and the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya where we find a chapter on *Vṛddha-Saṃyoga*, meaning 'Association with the learned', bears testimony to it. The word *paṇḍita* is deeply rooted in Sanskrit and is *a priori* unlikely to have been borrowed from the Dravidian language ; and yet it can hardly be doubted, I think, that its origin is Dravidian. Because there are not only the direct descendants of the root *paṇḍu* more numerous in the Dravidian language than in Sanskrit, but collateral words of the same significance are also very abundant, whereas in Sanskrit no correlative root is available. The derivation of the word *paṇḍā* from the Dravidian root *paṇḍu* is, therefore, much more natural than that which Sanskrit lexicographers have devised : cf. *pāṇḍā*, *pāṇḍe*, *pāḍe*, *pāḍ*.

NOTES

RABINDRANATH APPEALS TO GANDHIJI.

In a celebrated rejoinder to Rabindranath Tagore's plea that the human mind, even the most ordinary, feels the need of transcending the merely "utilitarian" and of feeling the beautiful at some moments of its being—which need must not therefore be neglected—Gandhiji rebuked the Poet for living for the morrow and presenting to his country's gaze "the beautiful picture of birds early in the morning singing hymns of praise as they soar into the sky"; for he (Gandhiji) had had "the pain of watching those who for want of strength could not be coaxed even into a flutter of their wings. The human bird under the Indian sky gets up weaker than when he pretended to retire." The present need of India is therefore absolutely economic, for "to a people famishing and idle the only acceptable form in which God can dare appear is work and promise of food as wages."

Sublime words!—worthy of being made as the gospel of the new India! And the Poet accepted them as such. But he wondered—or might have wondered—how the rebuke applied to him. For he has never advocated that people should sing on empty stomachs, nor that harmonious sounds can perform the function of bread. In fact he had advocated the Arts because they too, along with food (though not in so primary a fashion), satisfy a genuinely *human* need. And on Gandhiji's side, the Poet was justified in questioning that, if food be indeed the "only acceptable form in which God can dare appear" to the masses, why then did Gandhiji advocate so many other things for them which cannot strictly be justified on economic grounds; for example, that man needs to pray, that "spiritual" women should shave their heads, that married couples should not mate, and so on—"telling the beads of negation?" If therefore self-abnegation be a higher need of man, so may also self-expression of a certain kind be a real need.

This question has come to have an added interest because of Gandhiji's proposal to found an All India Village Industries Museum. When S. J. Kumarappa came to interview Rabindranath

in this connection, the latter said to him (I was present): "Please tell Mahatmaji that I appeal to him, since he is endeavouring to found a Museum for the nation, not to limit it to crafts as crafts. Crafts have been the media of artists in all ages, and our artists, as painters, as architects, as decorators, have helped our folks to get finer satisfaction out of the same material. The economic life of a nation is not such an isolated fact as Mahatmaji imagines and, today, side by side with economic poverty, we are faced with a cultural poverty which puts us to shame—shame that is in no way lessened when we consider what we once were. Our art treasures today are found in museums outside India, and our village artists are dying out, while the taste of our people is being slowly perverted by foreign fashions, ill-related to our life. Perhaps one day we will have no art treasures left: we will have to go visiting museums in foreign lands to feel pride in our past and pain in our present. Please tell Mahatmaji to consider that art is not a luxury of the well-to-do. The poor man needs it as much and employs it as much in his cottage-building, his pots, his floor-decorations, his clay deities, and in many other ways. If Mahatmaji's men go round collecting specimens of village industries, why may they not also look for and collect specimens of the various indigenous arts spread all over our land and waiting to be re-cherished? A section of the Museum may be devoted to it, which will show us how our peoples have lived and are living, and how in diverse ways, with what material means at their disposal, they have tried to create some *ras* in their life. I would do it myself, but I know only too well that I do not command the resources nor the necessary popular confidence that Mahatmaji commands."

The Poet spoke in a somewhat excited tone. He feels genuinely and acutely on this point. We dare say S. J. Kumarappa carried this message to Mahatmaji. But will he consider?

S. J. Kumarappa may also have communicated to him what Nandalal Bose said on this point. It is not true, the latter said, that artistic activity has no economic consequences. How does Mahatmaji like our people buying pictures of deities (they all buy because they need them) printed in Germany and Japan? And I have seen, he continued, our poorest villagers buying bangles and anklets and necklaces and ear-rings made in Japan because they are fast losing faith in our own. When the poorest of our people need these things, will not Mahatmaji help us

(artists in general) to direct these needs and make them believe once more in the beauty of our native forms?

But will Gandhiji consider?

Co-operative movement among the Santals.

That the Poet not only *feels* the Santals as an artist (which a preceding poem testifies) but has also felt *for* them as one human being for another, was amply illustrated when on the 16th of April the Santals of three adjoining villages invited him to open their first co-operative stores. It was an interesting sight, the Poet sitting surrounded by the Santals, both men and women (for these simple, healthy folk never learned to "safeguard" their women, in spite of the example of their Aryan and Semitic neighbours), who received him in their own ceremonial fashion. Their *Brati-balakas* (boy scouts organised by Sriniketan) formed lines and saluted and yelled. One of their women came forward, put a garland of fresh flowers round the Poet's neck, annointed his forehead, and presented him with a piece of cloth made by one of them. The Santals, in spite of the centuries of more or less serfdom, carry no trace of servility about them. They carry themselves with an air of independence and a healthy grace which we have always envied. I wonder if they know how much the Poet admires their natural grace.

Then one of the Santals (presumably one of their *intelligentsia*) read a speech in which he paid a tribute to what the Poet, through the Department at Sriniketan, had done for them. The speech disclosed several interesting facts. Their five villages had been helped to form themselves into a Society which has been carrying on the fourfold programme of Education, Health, Cottage Industries, and Agriculture; with a combined strength of 111 families, making up 570 individuals. He claimed that they had built 996 yards of road and 1192 of drain, and cleared seven *bighas* of jungle and filled up nine pits of stagnant water; with perceptible improvement in their health. They had taken advantage of the educational scheme run by Sriniketan and had their children enrolled as *Brati-balakas*; they had also been helped to cultivate sugar-cane which they found more profitable than paddy. Nineteen members had kitchen gardens of their own, and they had a small poultry house—supplied by Sriniketan, with Chittagong breed. Some of their members had been taught weaving, carpentry, book-binding, etc. They had also established a Paddy Stores where they deposited

paddy in time of surplus and from which they borrowed in time of need. They were linked to the Visva-Bharati Central Co-operative Bank. It was with the help of that bank that the new Co-operative Stores was being started. It was a long list that he enumerated.

The Poet also spoke a few words. He said that the present scene reminded him, by contrast, of the time when he first started to do work among the Santals who, then, had looked at him and his workers suspiciously and half-hostilely; which was quite natural since if the poor have learnt to dread the *bhadra lok* (the bourgeois) everywhere in the world it was because the latter have always exploited them for their profit. What he particularly appreciated among the Santals was that unlike many other Indians, they never depended on the help of others but relied on themselves and never sold their dignity.

The function ended with a Santal dance. The Santal dance is a fascinating sight. It is the most perfect and the most beautiful representation I have seen of the aggressive, futile, comic male and the passive, self-assured, mocking will of the female. The movements are monotonous, but some monotonies do not seem to pall.

K. R. Kripalani

REVIEWS

Dr. P. K. Acharya on Indian Architecture.

Ordinarily research scholars seem to ignore the fact that the past is of interest to us only in so far as it was *living* and that unless they discover it for us in such a way as to make us feel its life, we may admire them for their patience and industry but will not be the wiser for their labours. I have often felt sad that so much human talent and industry should disappear in the publication of matter where bones keep on rattling without forming for us an outline of the figure that once moved. I, therefore, cannot help congratulating Dr. P. K. Acharya of the Allahabad University for his great work *Manasara*. I am not qualified to pronounce judgment on ancient Indian architecture, but I can say this much that the learned author has succeeded in re-fashioning for us, out of the debris of the past, a picture of the forms of ancient architecture which, while it speaks much for his scholarly equipment, has the additional merit of interesting us in a real human way. The indirect glimpses it gives into the life of the people whose architecture he discusses, are something for which his readers will have reason to be grateful to him.

Rabindranath Tagore

Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India.

By Edward Thompson and G. T. Garratt.
Publishers, Macmillan.

The authors are too well-known to the reading public to need any introduction. Mr. Thompson had, in his earlier days, made a reputation for himself as a fearless and independent critic of the bureaucracy. Of late, no doubt, his outspoken and rather unsympathetic criticism of the leaders of Indian thought has, to some extent, damaged his reputation as a friend of India. But it must be admitted that Thompson's criticism, however unpalatable, has always been honest and sincere, and, undoubtedly, clever.

Mr. Garratt by his earlier book *An Indian Commentary* clearly established his claim to be considered a thoughtful and

impartial student of Indian affairs. His analysis of the economic position of the Indian peasant has rarely been equalled. As a member of the civil service he has had direct and first-hand knowledge of the condition of "the voiceless millions" of this country.

When two such men have joined hands to write a history of modern India, one would expect in it not only patient research, but keen insight and fearless criticism. We acknowledge freely that herein we have not been disappointed. Even a cursory reading of the book under review will satisfy the reader that the learned authors have examined carefully a mass of original evidence, marshalled their facts with great assiduity, and drawn their conclusions in a fair and logical manner. The idea of dividing the book into eight sections on a chronological basis is also very sound, far sounder than the usual one of representing the British period of Indian history as the triumphal march of a succession of Viceroys.

The style of writing is likewise attractive, and, where occasion requires it, trenchant. To the student of history, the rise of British rule in India is one of the most romantic episodes in the annals of the world. The authors have never lost sight of this. "Secondary figures, Indian and English, play a living part in the narrative."

At places, there is a journalistic, but very human, touch in the language employed by the authors, which may not win the approval of the more fastidious reader. But in our opinion this touch does not in any way detract from the merit of the book. For, after all, the work is not one meant exclusively for the shelves of a sombre and learned academic library. I quote below a few lines from the preface to show the spirit in which the learned authors have approached their subject.

"The historian's task has been made difficult by the animosities which have distracted the world during the last twenty years, and by their repercussions, official and unofficial. The mischievous tendency to make historical truth subservient to administrative efficiency has been increased by changes in legal practice and procedure, which operate as an effective censorship" (p. vii). (The censor today would certainly not have passed "The other side of the Medal".)

"By far our hardest task has been to avoid a national or racial bias. We have both had long and close connections with

India, and friendships that have given us a feeling of second nationality; but inevitably our first loyalty is to our own country, one of the last in which free and unregimented thinking is still possible. Yet love of England cannot blind us to the dangers which beset Western civilization, and we are convinced of the immense influence that India, called to reinvigorated existence, could exert in solving those problems which now oppress the mind of man. We send out this book hoping that it will work for that understanding between the two countries which fate has linked so strongly together" (p. viii).

Reading the above lines with the last page of the epilogue (p. 655), it is clear that the book has a definite mission. It aims (1) at telling the whole truth about the history of the British period, and (2) at establishing a better understanding between the natives of India and their rulers. But it is by no means a propagandists' book. Its value as a historical work is very great, and its depth is undoubted in spite of its sparkle.

A glance at the contents will show how systematically the authors have tackled their subject. The gradual development of the administrative machine has been carefully traced from the Foundation and Consolidation of the East India Company in Book I to Bureaucracy on the Defensive in Book VII and Dyarchy in Operation in Book VIII. The necessary dramatic touch to stimulate the imagination and interest of the average reader has been given by such attractive headlines as, Racial Estrangement and Changing Hindu Outlook (Book IV), Parental Administration (Book VI), and Growth of Nationalism (Book VII). In fact the title itself has a dramatic flavour. *Rise* and *Fulfilment* sound very much like the first and fifth acts of a drama. We ourselves do not approve of the word *fulfilment*. It can have no meaning at the present stage of India's history, with everything in the melting pot. The *fulfilment*, let us hope, is yet to come.

We do not like to dwell on the last few chapters of the book, as they deal definitely with current and controversial political topics. We have our own views on Indian nationalism. To many of us it has the sanctity of a creed. The present is not the occasion to set forth either our views or our creed. But to us it appears that the whole talk of constitution-making is futile. The word Constitution is not applicable in the case of India as she is today. From the earliest days of the Company's regime the administrative machinery has undergone periodical alteration to

meet new exigencies as they have arisen. One such period of change is on us today. But any fresh administrative arrangement that Government might think fit to make will only be an arrangement, and nothing more. It cannot be dignified with the name of a Constitution. The learned authors might have made this position clearer. The granting of a constitution is, after all, only an euphemistic way of describing the submission of the autocrat to the will of a united nation, a contingency not likely to arise in India for a long time yet, for the very good reason that the nation itself is as yet in an embryonic stage. The sordid and undignified scramble for jobs that we see around us does not indicate the development of any true national consciousness.

What is remarkable about the book under review is that there is no attempt whatsoever at whitewashing anybody. There is a refreshing candour apparent throughout its pages, which reminds one of the historical writings of the late Colonel Malleson. Nor have the authors been niggardly in bestowing praise even on the enemy where praise is due. We quote a few passages below to illustrate this. Referring to the Plassey period: "A gold lust unequalled since the hysteria that took hold of the Spaniards of Cortes' and Pizzaro's age filled the English mind. Bengal in particular was not to know peace till it had been bled white" (p. 91).

Regarding Clive: "Clive's enormous greed provided an example against which his severity towards others . . . was entirely ineffective. For the monstrous financial immorality of English conduct in India for many a year after this, Clive was largely responsible" (p. 95).

With regard to Nanda Kumar a passage is quoted with approval on p. 139: "The offence which had not barred an Englishman's path to a peerage was now to doom a Hindoo to the gallows." The Englishman was obviously Clive.

To Nawab Mir Qasim, the inveterate enemy of the Company, the following tribute of praise is paid on p. 100: "Mir Qasim was a genuine patriot and an able ruler, who quickly retrenched expenditure and suppressed disorders. But he was to be driven to the edge of insanity, if not over it."

On pp. 206 and 207, there is a remarkably impartial estimate of the character of the notorious Tipoo Sultan.

Nana Farnavis of Poona, another irreconcilable foe of the Company is described as "a man of strict veracity, humane, frugal and charitable" (p. 215).

The following passage on p. 114 is also very frank: "We are today sensitive about the charge that in India we act on the high Roman maxim, *divide et impera*. In the eighteenth century it was statesmanship's normal aim and no one saw any harm in it."

Again on p. 213: "The greatest Indian statesman of the eighteenth century, Nana Farnavis, through perilous decades had kept his nation, the Marathas, from falling under the Company's all-conquering sway. Courteously and without giving offence adequate for war, he had put by numerous invitations to walk into the parlour where Nizam, Nawabs of Oudh, Bengal, the Carnatic, and several smaller rulers were being entertained."

Referring to a later period, this interesting passage appears on p. 282; "The Nizam's contingent was so highly paid that employment in his service, civil or military, was eagerly sought by the officers both of the King's and the Company's army. The Resident was importuned with applications for these comfortable staff appointments, and large sums passed annually into the pockets of our own people. The joyous catchword was, 'Nizzy pays for all'."

There is no attempt at drawing a veil over the disgraceful transactions that passed between the Company and certain treacherous Sikh Sardars before the Sikh wars. "The Sikhs were practically deserted by their commanders, Dal Singh and Tej Singh, who were both in correspondence with the enemy" (p. 371). ". . . annexing Kashmir and selling it to Gulab Singh who had remained neutral to see which way victory would go" (p. 374).

Chilianwala in the second Sikh war is called a "drawn battle" in the present book, though Hunter in his history of India qualified the phrase by saying, "which British patriotism prefers to call a drawn battle." Such little lapses are really negligible. We mention them merely because the writers have set before themselves such a high standard of fairness and veracity.

In this connection we would like to point out one or two passages which in our opinion are not in keeping with the general tone of the book. On p. 309, at the foot of a quotation from Elphinstone, appears the following: "The dog was beginning to walk on his hind legs like a man—remotely; he did not do it well, but he was beginning to do it." The simile is in bad taste. It is not the reviewer's province to refer to a dog's teeth, but why ask for it?

The attitude of the authors towards Bengal and the Bengalis

is rather anomalous. On p. 310, we find very high praise for the Bengali of the nineteenth century. "The Brahmo Samaj today is a dying institution. But for seventy years its influence was all-pervading in every higher walk of Bengali life, and it produced a succession of men for whom the only adequate adjective is 'Noble' . . . Bengali intellectual and spiritual life . . . was a beacon to the rest of India, which Bengal saved by her example, as she was saving herself by her exertions."

But on p. 576, there is this frank chuckle of joy at Bengal's gloomy future: "With the removal of the capital to Delhi and the rapid development of higher education in other provinces, Bengal has lost its old leadership. The War gave unwelcome prominence to the essentially pacific nature of its inhabitants. Even the nationalist movement became centred in the west, and Bengal has contributed little to its development after the War, gaining its chief notoriety by irresponsible political murders. Finally time has had its revenge. The new Bengal under any democratic system will have a small Muslim majority, though its politically conscious classes are almost entirely Hindu. Its future as an autonomous province within a federation is probably more precarious than that of any other part of India."

The only remark we wish to make is that it is not open to a historian to chuckle at anybody's expense. It really does not matter very much if a foreigner does not appreciate the Bengali's "low emotional flash point." After all Messrs. Thompson and Garrat have between them been very much more considerate towards the Bengali than their predecessors in the field of history. Even a fair-minded writer like Malleon could not avoid the temptation of having a fling at the Bengali, whenever he got the chance.

The learned authors have carefully analysed the development of the Anglo-Indian mentality from period to period, and shown how this mentality reacted on the subject population, and ultimately affected the course of events. The whole book must be read to understand this psychological aspect of British Indian History. We shall try to give the reader some idea of it by quoting a few passages selected at random.

"Men like Elphinstone and Munro had envisaged an India in which the British did little more than keep the peace. Leaving the administration in Indian hands, they would have trusted to education to cure such evils as they believed to exist. The next generation of officials was conscious of the clash between two civilisations,

one of which they believed to be improving and the other to be in the last stages of degradation." This passage on p. 330 relates to the period of social reform under Bentinck and afterwards.

Thompson's views on the Mutiny are well-known and need not be set forth here. But the following extract from p. 462 is interesting: "Educated Hindus could read the virulent attacks in the European Press on Canning, Grant, and other 'humanity-pretenders' who were endeavouring to restore the rule of law. Muslims heard of the punishment meted out to their co-religionists . . . These things were not done in a corner, and it is absurd to imagine that they did not affect profoundly the millions who had remained passive and had viewed events with the philosophy of a race which has seen many empires pass."

"No educated Indian has ever forgotten the lesson of the Ilbert Bill. They were accustomed to rulers who could be influenced by cajolery, entreaty, bribery or threats of revolt, but it was an entirely new experience to see a Government, and especially the aloof and powerful British Government, deflected from its purpose by newspaper abuse and an exhibition of bad manners" (p. 498).

"Lord Curzon's policy . . . combined with his off-hand methods of expressing his opinions were well suited to bring Moderates and Extremists into the field against the Government" (p. 547).

"The Armistice added to the general exasperation. Victory brought a certain racial arrogance, accentuating the worst features of the British occupation . . . Certain officials who had remained in India during the War seemed to take a delight in being rude to Indians who had done the same . . . political Indians saw in them (Sedition Bills) a direct challenge, not unlike the Partition of Bengal, but providing better grounds for a struggle because it was a challenge which would unite every party and every creed" (p. 650).

We shall now close this lengthy and rather rambling review by recommending the book very strongly to the Indian readers. It is an impartial and critical study of men and events in India during the British period—impartial to an extent unknown before, and critical without any exhibition of pettiness or petulance.

C. C. Dutt

East and West.

An International Series of Open Letters: Gilbert Murray and
Rabindranath Tagore. International Institute of
Intellectual Co-operation—Paris.

This exchange of letters between Prof. Gilbert Murray and Rabindranath Tagore provides a reading that is without question ennobling, even if somewhat sad. It is sad when one reflects how helpless and baffled the thinkers of both East and West are feeling in this modern chaotic world. The civilisation to which intellect has contributed the Aladdin's Lamp of Science seems to be instigating the *jinn* to harass and haunt the peace of the men of intellect themselves. There are no personal complaints in the letters—no decent thinker complains of personal wrong; the complaint is that men should be throwing the fruits of intellect at each other's heads, like stones to break heads with, instead of sharing those fruits to increase the common store of health and happiness. In particular, Nationalism, which the Liberals had reared up in the belief that it was the best guarantee of individual liberty has been turned into a cloak of commercial greed, jealousy and blood-thirstiness.

In a world where international morality is almost non-existent what is going to be the attitude of thinkers and artists—all those who think and those who feel? It was seen, during the World War, writes Prof. Gilbert Murray, that "often the intellectual leaders in the various nations had been not better but, if anything, worse than the common people in the bitterness and injustice of their feelings." Men of intellect may recognise that there are differences between nations, between their habits and attitudes, and these differences are real; but they are vastly exaggerated. And in any case, there is always more in common between man and man than there is to divide man from man. "And it is valuable to remember that, as Plato pointed out long ago, while criminals tend to cheat and fight one another, and stupid people to misunderstand one another, there is a certain germ of mutual sympathy between people of good will or good intelligence. An artist cannot help liking good art, a poet good poetry, a man of science good scientific work, from whatever country it may spring. And that common love of beauty or truth, a spirit indifferent to races and frontiers, ought, among all the political discords and antagonisms of the world, to be a steady

well-spring of good understanding, a permanent agency of union and brotherhood.

"There is no need for sentimentality, no need for pretence. If I enjoy the beauty of your poetry, if I sympathise with your rejection of honours from a government which you had ceased to respect, that makes already a sufficient bond between us: there is no need for me to share or pretend to share, or make a great effort to share, your views on every subject, or because I admire certain things that are Indian to turn round and denounce Western Civilization. Men of imagination appreciate what is different from themselves: that is the great power which imagination gives."

These are noble words and their effect is heightened by his continuing to believe in "the healthiness and high moral quality of our poor distressed civilization. It made the most ghastly war in history, but it hated itself for doing so. . . . I still have hope for the future of this tortured and criminal generation: perhaps you have lost hope and perhaps you will prove right. But the divergence of view need make no rift between us."

In fact, there is no divergence of view: the Poet, too, has not lost hope. He answers: "I cannot afford to lose my faith in this inner spirit of Man, nor in the sureness of human progress which following the upward path of struggle and travail is constantly achieving, through cyclic darkness and doubt, its ever-widening ranges of fulfilment." Nor has the Poet lost his faith even in "the future of this tortured and criminal generation": "When I read some of the outstanding modern books published after the War I realise how the brighter spirits of young Europe are now alive to the challenge of our times. Nothing can be of greater joy to us in India than to find how unimpeachably great some of your scholars, historians, artists and literary men are in their fearless advocacy of truth, their passion for righteousness." But unfortunately, "whatever is finest in Europe cannot pass through to reach us in the East." For "the one outstanding visible relationship of Europe with Asia today is that of exploitation. . . . It is physical strength that is most apparent to us in Europe's enormous dominion and commerce, illimitable in its extent and immeasurable in its appetite. Our spirit sickens at it. Everywhere we come against barriers in the way of direct human kinship. . . . There is no people in the whole of Asia today which does not look upon Europe with fear and suspicion."

"But this, as we realize, is only one side, however real and

painful, of the Western civilization as it appears to us in the East." So that it is still possible for him to "aver that in the life of the West they have a large tract where mind is free; whence the circulation of their thought-currents can surround the world."

Reviewing this exchange of generous sentiments and noble assurances, two reflections suggest themselves. First: it is obvious to what a high plane the noblest representatives of different nations have to strain their wings to be able to accept each other for what they are. It is as *Thinkers*, as *Artists*, as *Men of imagination* that they feel they can meet. Therein lies the tragedy of the situation: as simple ordinary men they are bound to peoples whose interests, and therefore whose passions, contradict each other. How far and how long can imagination keep persons together when in actual life they are tied to interests that keep them apart? The English Liberal thinkers, in particular, are identified with a historical tradition which, for all its liberalising influence, has built up the effective machine of modern Imperialism. Now, imaginatively perceived, even Imperialism may appear to have some virtue; but our mortal frames groan under its ruthless wheels and some of us may be excused for heeding the groans of our own people.

Secondly: even if *Men of imagination* realise their mutual kinships so effectively as to forget their less spiritual and more material alliances, that will hardly be sufficient to insure peace in the world. The common peoples of different nations who are more and more gaining power in the State cannot be supposed to be either very intellectual or very imaginative. And yet it is they who can make or unmake peace. If these peoples are to move along a common path of progress and husband a common harvest of civilisation that men of intellect have sown for them, then they must have a common faith, a common creed, and must be linked by common material needs. Mere intellectual appreciation of each other's view-point may have a chastening influence but it is not enough.

Men of imagination who can stretch their hands across the conflict of material interests are few in this world. Their voices will always sound noble but, in a world where Plato's philosophers have yet no power, they are bound to be ineffectual. And, therefore, however much one may sympathise with the activities of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation and

admire its active spirits like Prof. Gilbert Murray, he would be an irrational optimist who believed that the world-disease is to be healed through them.

K. R. Kripalani

Ancient India and Indian Civilization.

By Paul Masson-Oursel, Helena William-Grabowska
and Philippe Stern.

Published by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd.,
London. 21s.

Most works that claim to be histories of ancient India have disappointed those who sought to find in them an understanding of the true spirit of Indian Civilization. Long and interminable narrations of political events may tell us much about a people but not everything; so that we find innumerable judgments have been passed on this land and its peoples ever since European curiosity found a favourable field in ancient India; but comparatively little justice has been done to the India that even in its worst period of subjection has not ceased to create. Because political data are easy to collect and classify, and creative values are difficult to measure, much of Indian truth has been obscured in the name of scientific method.

The authors of the work under notice, therefore, deserve to be congratulated for having redeemed the scientific method of the charge of false ministry, for they have brought to their task this true spirit of enquiry and sympathetic understanding. And appearing as it does, in that famous series of "The History of Civilization", edited by Prof. C. K. Ogden, it bids fair to prove its worth as a standard publication on the subject, written by such competent scholars as M. Paul Masson-Oursel who contributes the section on Political History, Society, Philosophy and Religion; Mme. Helena William-Grabowska, who describes the Literature of Ancient India; and M. Philippe Stern who surveys the Art-expressions: all of whom collaborate in a manner that has preserved the richness of diverse scholarship without injuring the unity of conception. A very thoughtful and illuminating foreword from the pen of Dr. Henri Berr, and a comprehensive, and, therefore, useful bibliography add much to the value of the work.

The book opens with a somewhat recondite description of the

country and its population, in the course of which ethnological beginnings of Indian civilization are traced with appropriate references to their linguistic, anthropological and other allied factors. Naturally the problems presented are too vast to be adequately discussed in a brief space as a book like this can provide. But the writer (of the section under consideration) has condensed them without making himself unintelligible, though there are occasional points which require a little more elucidation. The historical survey which is preceded by a summary of the pre-historic civilizations lately unearthed, takes the reader through the drama of political events, and he reaches the end without any tedium; rather with his memory fully refreshed. The so-called dark period in the pre-Gupta times is left dark though much light has of late been thrown on it by Mr. Jayaswal's thesis on the rise of the Vakatakas during that period. With regard to the campaigns of Alexander in India of which so much capital has been made in previous works, the writer relies not only on the foreign evidences but also on the native sources, and gives a very impartial account.

There are some assertions which the author seems to have accepted either in haste or by bias, for example, that Asoka imbibed from Persia his idea of world-wide kingship; or that the caste system had always existed in its present degenerate form. But they need not detain us.

The economic life of ancient India has been widely discussed; but not adequately related to the social life of the people. It is this superficial analysis, devoid of an integral conception of the whole thing, that might be responsible for the writer's opinion that the wretched economic existence of the immense majority of the Hindus created among them a melancholy pessimism, a hatred of life which explains some forms of thought, specially the so-called ascetic ideal of life. The conclusion is rather hasty, and the data from which it is drawn hardly supported by facts. The intense and continuous activity in every sphere of creative life, as well as the testimonies of foreign visitors including Megasthenes, Fa-Hian and Hiuen Tsang are there to show that the people were always in affluent circumstances. And there were various and adequate safeguards against such untoward calamities as famines, etc. The ascetic turn of the Indian mind has, therefore, to be traced to other origins. We might also bear in mind the remark of an

eminent Indian thinker that a beggar cannot renounce and that man can be averse to pleasure only when he has had a good taste of it.

The writer seems to be at his best when he brilliantly unfolds the spiritual life of ancient India, its religions and philosophies, holding before the reader the vivid picture of the several systems of thought and their influence on religious sects and philosophical schools. The writer has brought to bear on this section, the largest in the book, remarkable insight combined with a masterly command of facts. He believes, and rightly, that religion and philosophy were closely interwoven in the texture of India's spiritual life; and he takes note of almost all the religio-philosophical systems of India, both in their ritualistic and psychic implications. In his opinion, "the lesson which India teaches us is that which she taught herself—that to understand better is to free oneself." The exegesis of the Veda could have been made more up-to-date by including a reference to the latest contribution of Sri Aurobindo in that direction. And the brief notice of India's scientific achievements would have been a little more explicit if mention had been made of the other branches of science, the data of which are available in the *Sukranitisa*r and in other literary sources.

The section on literature, with its delightful summaries of the plots of the epics, plays and stories, describes with remarkable clarity the various literary forms and expressions in different periods of history. We are led through the varied stages of India's literary aspirations, the simple but profoundly suggestive hymns of the Vedas, the beauties of the analytical type of literature represented in its post-Vedic development, the sublimities of the epic poetry, the romantic classicism of the *kavyas* and the dramas, the wonderfully charming story elements of the narrative literature. Except in one or two places the writer is very clear in her views all through. The theory of the Greek inspiration of Indian drama has lost much ground; and the probability of an independent dramatic development in India is gradually gaining support.

The exposition of Indian art has been attempted in a manner that reflects a peculiar amalgam of the Western and Indian ways of art-interpretation. The author has followed his native genius without being indifferent to the idealism of Indian art whose appeal he has at times found too irresistible. The discussion of

the so-called Greco-Buddhist art, and its influence on the original art of India is well done, though a little too lengthy for the book. The recently unearthed antiquities at Hodda in the north-western region of India have been characterised as the second phase of the Greco-Buddhist art. The remarks about the foreign origins of certain forms of early Indian art need not be accepted as the last word on the subject. In the absence of any particular relic in Bactria which is held to have transmitted Perso-Hellenic art to India, it would be gratuitous to assume that the Asokan pillar is a foreign adaptation. The so-called Greek origin of the Buddha image has been challenged, and its Indian genesis established, by Dr. Coomaraswamy. The development of architecture is noticed mainly in its external elaborations; the aesthetic and highly symbolical aspect of certain types of temple architecture is more or less ignored. The writer has nothing particular to say about the exquisite figuration of Dhyani Buddha which so truly represents the Indian ideal in art; though he has developed a new thesis, highly suggestive, in "the *tribhanga*, the triple bend, which Indian art has given to its most beautiful figures all through its history." Like so many other forms of Indian art, the *tribhanga* has also spread outside and influenced the art of Central Asia, China, Japan, Tibet and Nepal. It becomes particularly interesting when the writer tries to discover its affinity to the characters in the famous contemporary dramas. Says the writer: " . . . In the *tribhanga*, pliancy and balance are united. The female figures at Ajanta, by their suppleness and nonchalant grace, seem to indicate self-surrender, voluptuous delight and languor; by their balance, which often looks like a backward movement, they appear to express a modesty which makes them as it were recoil upon themselves. This union of contraries, which seems to me to be characteristic of the greatest works of art, and which here consists of passion and self-surrender on the one hand and modesty on the other, struck me at my first sight of the genuine figures of Ajanta. For a moment I feared that my imagination was leading me astray, but literature afterwards confirmed my impression. 'My body', says Sakuntala, 'goes forward, and my mind, which is not at one with it, turns back.' This union in single character of balance and suppleness, which often leads to the attitude of the *tribhanga*, does not only express fleshy love, even in its refined form. We find it in flying and prostrate figures, and again in the great

bodhisattvas of cave I at Ajanta in which the breadth and balance of volumes and the very broad treatment of light and dark is combined with the bending effect of the *tribhanga*, and the serene expression of the faces seems to be mingled with one of melancholy and profound tenderness. What is united modesty and fire in the amorous woman seems to become in the *bodhisattvas* complete detachment from the outer world and concentration inwards in the equilibrium and serenity of meditation, intimately mingled with infinite compassion, tenderness, and love for all suffering creatures."

Well-chosen plates illustrating some typical examples of Indian art are an embellishment to the book.

On the whole, the book leaves us with a feeling of grateful admiration for the learned authors who have reconstructed India's past with such sympathy and understanding. The India that is made to live in these pages is an India that has ever been struggling to express her genius in ways that might not always have been beautiful but were always stupendous.

Shishir Mitra

The Spirit of the Chinese Revolution.

By Arthur N. Holcombe.

Published by Arnold A. Knopf Ltd., London. 7/6.

The book consists of six chapters embodying lectures delivered early in 1930 at Boston under the auspices of the Lowell Institute. The author who is a Professor of Government at Harvard University never had the good fortune to meet Dr. Sun Yat-Sen but he has personally known almost all the other leaders of Revolutionary China whom he discusses in course of his lectures. The six chapters of the book deal successively with the spirit of six great forces which have tried to mould the Chinese Revolution, viz. Democracy, Bolshevism, Christianity, Militarism, Capitalism, and Science; and are associated with the names of Sun Yat-Sen, Borodin, Fung Yu-hsiang, Chiang Kai-shek, T. V. Soong, and C. T. Wang. The chapter on Science, however, though nominally associated with the name of C. T. Wang, deals almost exclusively with the constructive aspects of Sun Yat-Sen's Theory of Revolution and to some may appear far the most important and interesting portion of the book. Certain it is that in no other

book on China written by a foreigner is Dr. Sun's brilliant theory of government dealt with such admirable discernment, sympathy and thoroughness. Dr. Sun's political theory is not merely of intense theoretical interest to the student of political science but is a great and living force in the world of practical politics; in as much as the dictatorship of the Kuomintang is officially wedded to it. Mr. Holcombe observes: " . . . his general system of political thought compares favourably with that of other great revolutionary leaders of modern times. Indeed it may be doubted whether any great revolutionary movement has been provided with a more serviceable political philosophy. The possession of such a political philosophy is a source of enduring strength to the Chinese revolutionary movement and to the political system which that movement has created. It gives the dictatorship of the Nationalist Party, the Kuomintang, a better prospect of stability than that of any other form of dictatorship that has been suggested for China." Mr. Holcombe's observations lead one to think that Dr. Sun's theory has become as great a practical force in China as Marxism in Soviet Russia.

Sun Yat-Sen's theory of revolution distinguishes between three stages in the onward march of China: first, capture of power by a revolutionary party; secondly, economic reconstruction and civic and political education under the dictatorship of the party; and, thirdly, establishment of constitutional government or democracy when the people's training for it is completed. According to Mr. Holcombe the first stage has been successfully negotiated, the second is in progress and the prospects of the third being reached are far from being gloomy. Chiang Kai-shek is of course a militarist but he is not quite the sort of militarist that the world has come to associate with the name of China. The dictatorship of the Kuomintang is, as the author interprets it, a stage of reconstruction and education, with a view to the future establishment of democracy combined with plenty. Attempts to establish democratic or, to be precise, parliamentary forms of government in China have been premature and have failed. Bolshevism has failed too not only because it is against the spirit of Confucianism and its milieu, patriarchal society, but also because it lacks the objective conditions of industrial development which only can give birth to a proletarian party of the needed strength. Militarism of the old type has failed too and the progressively weaker series of China's "strong

men" have failed to bring solace and contentment into the hearts of foreign merchants at the treaty ports and legation headquarters. The hope of China therefore lies in looking forward to democracy which will be established at some distant date through the development of capitalism and the application of science—political science more than natural science—under the dictatorship of the Nationalist Party. Such in brief is the skeleton that holds together Mr. Holcombe's lectures. .

The author is perfectly aware of the difficulties that lie in the way of the development of capitalism in China. But we note with regret that he has given undue attention to the difficulty of securing foreign credit owing to unsettled political conditions and has neglected the all-important question whether the industrial development of China is possible at all under conditions of capitalism which is essentially a world system, and which in its present stage of development necessarily takes the form of imperialism. The record of the Chiang Kai-shek administration does not hold out great hope that the tempo of industrial development in China will be increased to any appreciable extent under capitalist rule. It is thus doubtful how far the dictatorship of the Kuomintang is calculated to realise Dr. Sun's dream of perfect democracy.

The question of the proper attitude of a proletarian party to the national movement is a living one in India and those who are interested in it will doubtless find the second chapter of the book of absorbing interest. Mr. Holcombe's account scarcely encourages the belief that socialists and nationalists can go very far in the same boat. Mr. Holcombe is frankly a believer in capitalism and a sympathetic friend of the activities of Christian missions. Yet throughout the book he has tried to maintain a historico-objective outlook and has noted with care the positive contributions of the Communists to the Chinese national movement.

The book is written with the raciness and lucidity so characteristic of American writers. As a sane and serious study of the problem of China it will take a lot of beating.

A. P. Mitra

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful for the following publications received :

- (1) Some pamphlets (in Hindi) from the Hindi Sahitya Goshthi, Rangoon.
- (2) Yugoslav Peasants—By Countess Vera Crassi di Frangipani (*Drasthi* Publication).
- (3) From Hellenism & Havelism to Vital Art (*Drasthi* Publication).
- (4) Is India getting poor? By B. R. Sen, I. C. S. (Publicity Board, Bengal).
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Where the mind is without fear
and the head is held high,
Where knowledge is free ;
Where the world has not been broken
up into fragments by narrow domestic
walls ;

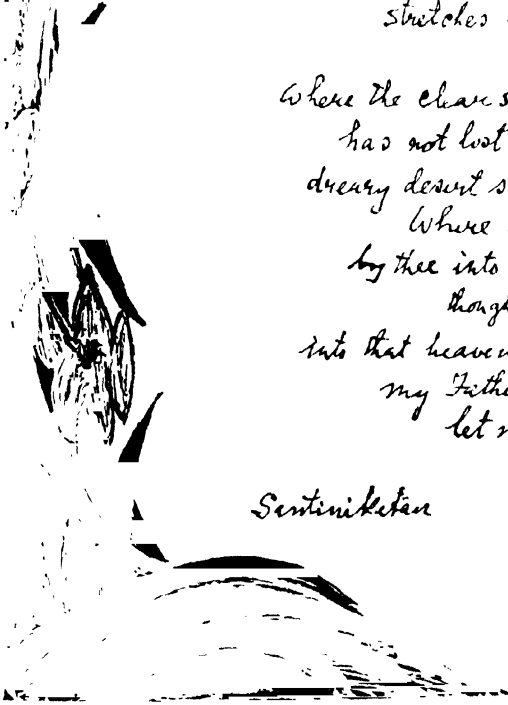
Where words come out from the
depth of truth ;
Where tireless striving
stretches its arms towards
perfection ;

Where the clear stream of reason
has not lost its way into the
dreary desert sand of dead habit ;
Where the mind is led forward
by thee into ever-widening
thought and action —

into that heaven of freedom,
my Father,
let my country awake.

Rabindranath Tagore,

Santiniketan





PL. II.

BUDDHA AT RAJGRIHA

Artist : *Nandalal Bose.*

THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

August

New Series, Vol. I. Part II.

1935

THE UNITY OF MANKIND

M. Winternitz

I.

HERDER, about one hundred and fifty years ago, had made the idea of humanity popular in Germany and in the world. Though he was fully aware that, in a certain way, every human faculty is "national, secular, individual," it was yet his greatest endeavour, in all his writings, to discover and recognize human values in the manifoldness of races and peoples. He collected, in prose and in poetry, numerous examples of gentleness, tolerance, dutifulness, and sacrifice among peoples of every stage of culture. The idea of mankind and the ideal of humanity were held up also by the great German classics, Goethe and Schiller. Fichte, the philosopher, assigned to his time the duty, to found a National State for mankind, for the final goal of all national formations should always be, to spread and grow into the culture of all mankind. And in 1872 Gustav Rümelin, a famous German writer and politician, said in one of his speeches as chancellor of the University of Tübingen: "The idea of mankind stands higher than all nationality (Volkstum)", and he praises the German nation who had more than any other always held high the idea of mankind: "Even if we liked to, we are not capable of despising the foreign, of requiting the hatred of the enemies with equal passion; we cannot help acknowledging the good wherever we may find it. . . . The poetry of no country has so directly looked up to the heights of mankind; science of no other nation has such a

universal and international character. . . . This ideal trait, love of truth and justice and humanity, will ever guide us into the right road."

How things have changed since in Germany ! In 1899 Houston Stewart Chamberlain, an Englishman by birth and a German by choice, published in German his book *Die Grundlagen des 19. Jahrhunderts* (*The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*), a book which roused the enthusiasm of the then German Emperor to such a height that he liked to present copies of it as a sign of his imperial favour to his friends and admirers. Another enthusiast, a rich private gentleman, made a gift of 10,000 Mark for the purpose of distributing copies of the book to libraries, specially school and students' libraries. Chamberlain, who was influenced by the French author of the book on *The Inequality of Human Races*, Count Alexandre de Gobineau, the first discoverer of the "Nordic legend", made great impression by using strong language rather than strong arguments. Thus he says : "Only disgraceful hatred of independent thinking or shameless falsification of history can see in the entrance of the Teutons into the history of the world anything but the rescue of agonizing mankind out of the claws of the Eternal-Bestial." To the "so-called unity of the human race" he concedes the character of a hypothesis, but "only as a personal, subjective conviction, lacking every material foundation." "Instead of echoing the stupid and lying phrases of mankind, which already eighteen hundred years ago were the fashion in the Semitic 'saloons' of Rome", we ought to remember that the strong must conquer and rule the weak.

Another German writer, Dietrich Schäfer, a professor of history, wrote in 1919, that the only way to the rebuilding of Germany was a strong national feeling as against the "absurdity of thought and feeling of mankind" ("Unding von Menschheitsdenken und-emfinden").

Hans Günther, who has come to be looked up to as an authority on race questions in Germany, since the rise of the present political system, declares that the idea of mankind can never form a sound basis for any creative or moral conviction. "Mankind", he says, "can never mean more than a sum of living creatures belonging to the species of man, and by counting all these creatures together we can only get an unmeaning number, never an uniformly acting organism." Only the national idea (the idea of "Volkheit") and for the Germans the idea of "Germanhood" (*Deutschheit*), which

henceforth can be nothing but striving after the Nordic type, can create any new values.

Also L. F. Clauss, in his book *Race and Soul*, much read in Germany to-day, declares that there is no such thing as "human" experience, but only that of a certain race type.

In 1930 Alfred Rosenberg, one of the political and cultural leaders of present day Germany, published his book *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts*, which had reached its 23rd edition in 1934, and of which more than 230,000 copies are said to have been sold before the beginning of this year. Rosenberg is the prophet of the new "religion of blood", that is, "the creed, that with the blood the divine being of man has to be defended"; it is "the faith, that the Nordic blood represents that mystery which has replaced and superseded the old sacraments." "Race is the likeness of a soul, possession of race a value in itself, having no relation to bloodless values", such as "mankind, universal church or an independent ego, separated from blood connections." "World reform, humanity, culture of mankind," are ideas which are foreign to the Nordic man and by which he has been humbugged in weak hours. Two forms of humanity have come, as a hostile temptation, over the Germans. The one calls itself democracy, the other social compassion, or humility, and love. But to-day, says Rosenberg, "it is clear to every honest German that this doctrine of equal love for all creatures was a heavy blow, struck at Nordic Europe. Christian pity and freemasonic 'humanity' have been most disastrous to European life. Beside the idea of national honour no other power should be suffered in the German Empire, "neither Christian love, nor the humanity of the freemasons, nor Roman philosophy." There can be no internationality of science or art. There is no art, except that of a certain blood, and what we call "science" (*"die Wissenschaft"*) is nothing but the very own creation of the Teuton race.

Some time ago I heard on the radio an address given by some schoolmaster in Berlin to a class of young people on the all-importance of race, and on our duties to our race. The hour of instruction was solemnly concluded with the song: "Sacred, sacred, sacred is the blood."

Not only popular writers on this "religion of blood", but even prominent scholars, like Fritz Lenz, an authority on social hygiene, and Eugen Fischer, certainly one of the first authorities on biology, proclaim the legend of the Nordic race, as against the ideas of mankind

and humanity. As Fischer tersely puts it : "There exist no men as such, but only men of certain races or race mixtures."

II.

Under these circumstances it may not be superfluous to ask ourselves, whether the idea of humanity and the belief in the unity of mankind are really out of date, being the mere out-come of pious wishes or sentimentality. Or is there any scientific foundation for our belief in the unity of mankind ?

Many years ago I heard a lecture by the famous anthropologist, Edward Tylor, then reader in anthropology at Oxford University, which he introduced with pointing out the difference between the scientist and the student of man. The latter has not, like the scientist, the experiment at his disposal. On the other hand, the student of man has the advantage, that he can experience the phenomena which are the subject of his study, in himself. This, it is true, presupposes a certain unity of all that is human. This was a matter of course for Edward Tylor, who says "that all tribes of men, from the blackest to the whitest, the most savage to the most cultured, have such general likeness in the structure of their bodies and the working of their minds, as is easiest and best accounted for by their being descended from a common ancestry, however distant," and "*we may accept the theory of the unity of mankind as best agreeing with ordinary experience and scientific research.*"¹

The great German geographer Friedric Ratzel, the founder of the new science of anthropogeography, says (in a paper written in 1900) : "The unity of mankind is first of all a fundamental fact of geography. As there is only one earth and only one connected surface of the earth, so there is only one mankind."

The belief in the unity of mankind, he says, which was once proclaimed by Herder, has never been shaken, and has been confirmed by science. The possibility of crossing between all human races is a fact, as also the existence of a common possession of cultural achievements. Ratzel has even drawn up an "inventory of the common possessions of mankind", including tools, fire, etc.²

In 1917 the anthropologist Felix von Luschan, who had a great

1. Anthropology, 1891, p. 5f.

2. Kleine Schriften II, 408ff. : Anthropogeographie II, 693 f.

personal acquaintance with a variety of dark races, said that the overwhelming majority of experts in anthropology are convinced "that the process of the origin of man took place only once and only on one spot of the earth, and that all human races now living are descendants from this one primal form."³

In fact, there is hardly any difference of opinion among earnest students of man even at the present day as to the uniform origin of man. In a most authoritative recent work on the races of men (*Rassenkunde und Rassengeschichte der Menschheit*, 1934), E. von Eickstedt writes: "All that we know of the anatomical and palaeobiological attributes of man, all that geology and anthropology have hitherto taught us, is in favour of a so-called monophyletic origin of man"; and he produces a great many arguments which disprove the assumption of a manifold origin of man.

Even Eugen Fischer has no doubts about man having originated only once, but he believes "that with the origin of man almost simultaneously or at least very early the breaking up into varieties was connected. It is not too much to say that origin of species is at the same time origin of races."⁴

But one might say, and it has been said by Günther, that only from the zoological point of view mankind is a unity, being a species, which only means that man is different from the beast.

It has, however, already been emphasized by Charles Darwin that "Although the existing races of man differ in many respects, as in colour, hair, shape of skull, proportions of the body, etc., yet if their whole structure be taken into consideration they are found to resemble each other closely in a multitude of points. Many of these are of so unimportant or of so singular a nature, that it is extremely improbable that they should have been independently acquired by aboriginally distinct species or races. The same remark holds good with equal or greater force with respect to the numerous points of mental similarity between the most distinct races of man. The American aborigines, Negroes and Europeans are as different from each other in mind as any three races that can be named; yet I was incessantly struck, while living with the Fuegians on board the "Beagle", with the many little traits of character, showing how similar their minds were to ours; and so it was with a full-blooded negro with whom I happened once to be intimate."⁵

3. Kriegsgefangene, p. 10.

4. Baur-Fischer-Lenz, Menschliche Erblchkeitslehre I, 135 (3rd Ed. 19 7).

5. The Descent of Man, 2nd Ed., 1896, p. 178.

Darwin adds that anybody reading the books of Ed. Tylor and John Lubbock "cannot fail to be deeply impressed with the close similarity between the men of all races in tastes, dispositions and habits." To mention only one thing, Ed. Tylor has compared the gesture-language of American Indian tribes with that of the European deaf-mutes, and has shown that a red-skin of America and a deaf-mute of any European country could easily understand each other by signs and gestures.

Since the days of Darwin and Tylor, our knowledge of the intellectual, moral, and cultural life of peoples of all races has enormously increased, and every progress of *ethnological* research has brought new proofs of the unity of the human *mind*.

The first product of the human mind is *language*, and there is hardly anything that separates the parts of mankind more than language. And yet the fact cannot be too much emphasized that language as an instrument for expressing thought is common to *all* men. It has been rightly stated already by Th. Waitz, the author of a monumental work on the primitive peoples, *Anthropologie der Naturvölker*, that the fact, that every member of the human race is a speaking animal, is one of the strongest arguments for the unity of mankind. The possession of an articulate language with a regular grammatical structure is not only a barrier between man and beast, but also a fact proving the closest relationship between all peoples in psychical respect. It is by no means a matter of course, that every man should be able to learn and understand the language of a foreign people. However intimate our intercourse with our dogs or our horses may be, we shall never be able to understand the "language" of our domestic animals, so as to be able to talk to them in their language. On the other hand, a missionary or an explorer who lives with some primitive tribe in Australia, Africa or America, even only for a short time, will be able to learn the language of the people, and to hold conversation with them. This proves that the basic forms of thinking and speaking are the same everywhere.

But language is not the only product of the human mind, which is common to all divisions of mankind. If we compare the manners and customs, the beliefs, the arts and works of technics, of the most different and distant peoples of the earth, we constantly meet with numerous individual variations and peculiarities, but also with the most striking coincidences.

I still remember being shown over the University Museum at

Oxford by Ed. Tylor, who was then keeper of the Museum. He had arranged the objects there, not according to countries and parts of the world, but according to the purpose for which they were made, and the ideas represented by them. So I could see in one room tools and weapons, hammers, knives, needles, arrows, fishing and hunting implements, instruments for fire-making, spinning, basket-making, etc., and it was wonderful to see how similar all these things were, in spite of variations in detail, as if they came from one workshop, though in reality they were collected from all parts of the world. Again in another room I could see all kinds of ornaments, witchcraft utensils, masks, cult objects, and the like, and these things also showed the greatest family likeness, though they came from the most distant countries of the earth.

It is also well-known to every ethnologist, that certain strange habits and customs are spread all over the world in a most astonishing agreement, such as tattooing, piercing the ears, noses, and lips for fixing ornaments in them, circumcision, levirate, magic rites, ancestor worship, etc. etc.

It is often in the most trivial things that we can see the most wonderful agreement in the working of the human mind between men of all races and peoples all over the world. As the Hindu says "jiva" ("live !") when a man sneezes, so people in old England said "waes hael" on the same occasion, and even in the beginning of the last century it was considered good manners in England to say "God bless you." And similar blessings over a sneezing person were pronounced in ancient Greece and Rome, they were or are still heard among all European nations, among Jews and Mohammedans, and European travellers were not a little surprised when they found the same custom among negroes in Africa and Red Indians in America.

When I read the other day in an account of a missionary who had lived long in Africa, that often a grown-up negro, when in great distress, will call for his mother who may be hundreds of miles away, I could not help being reminded of an incident that has remained in my memory from my earliest childhood : A little girl whose mother had died a few hours ago and who had come to tell us the sad news, was running back through the court-yard of our house and, terrified by a barking dog, began to cry out : "mother ! mother !"

Years ago (1878 and 1889) Richard Andree published two volumes of *Ethnographische Parallelen*, in which he shows on every page, how the same or similar cultural phenomena are found in the most different parts of the world. In a preface he says :

"As it cannot be denied, that everywhere the bodily attributes and faculties of men are the same, that they see, hear, sleep, eat in the same manner, so we find also that their mental functions, in their essential features, show everywhere the same basic forms, varying no doubt according to race and natural environment, but yet in spite of minor deviations, of the same original value and character."

These parallels and coincidences used to be accounted for by the old school of ethnologists from the psychological point of view, by assuming that the working of the human mind is the same everywhere, the same psychological causes leading to the same effects. Now-a-days ethnologists are more in favour of the theory, that certain elements of human culture, whether technical inventions or social habits and religious ideas, originated only in one region, and were spread from there to other parts of the world, either by being borrowed by one people from the other, or by being forced upon conquered peoples. The fact is, that the two theories do not exclude each other. But what interests us more is, that the one theory as well as the other must needs presuppose the unity of mankind. For one people would never adopt and assimilate customs, habits, beliefs, or even weapons and tools of another people, unless these peoples had something in common in their ways of thinking and feeling.

Not only the pioneers of the study of man, the anthropologists and ethnologists who wrote half a century ago, but also more recent students of the history of human civilisation, who write with authority and with a knowledge based on personal acquaintance with races and peoples of many lands, and who have made a special study of the great *differences* that exist between the peoples of the earth, yet agree in assuming some basic and essential unity of mankind. Thus Richard Thurnwald, who has an intimate knowledge of the natives of New Guinea and other primitive peoples, says: "The primitive psyche is in its fundamental character and instincts no other but the general human psyche, only *less*, and also sometimes differently, *inhibited*."⁶ G. van der Leeuw also, a prominent Dutch student of religion, while pointing out the great difficulties we have to encounter when we try to enter into the thoughts and feelings

6. Handbuch der vergleichenden Psychologie I, 2: Psychologie des primitiven Menschen, p. 300.

of foreign peoples, adds: "As true as it is that every man is in fact "another" with his own feelings, thoughts, and instincts, yet nobody will deny, that this "other" is after all a relative, and that in this sense there is nothing human that is altogether foreign to us."⁷ And again Wilhelm Koppers, professor of ethnology at Vienna University, says in a paper on universal history,⁸ that the idea of a universal history presupposes the unity of mankind, and that the representative students of ethnology, anthropology and prehistory all agree in reckoning with a uniform origin of man and his culture.

III.

In my University lectures on Ethnology, ever since 1899, I always devoted a chapter to clearing up the much misused terms "race", "people" and "nation". When discussing the meaning of "race", I had to speak of the unity of mankind as vouchsafed by the facts of anthropology and ethnology. When the war came, I hesitated at first when I came to this point in my lectures; it seemed almost absurd now to talk of the unity of mankind. But after a little consideration I found that the unity of mankind had never been made more evident than in the years of the world war, 1914 to 1919. Was it not easy to show how much the nations involved in the war had in common, and of how little consequence the differences of race and nation were, of how much greater importance were the opposite interests than the differences of race and nationality? Have we not seen, on both sides, closely related nations fighting against one another, while nations of different races fought side by side, disregarding even the limits of "black" and "white"? And the same passions, the same cruelties, the same relapses into primitive barbarism were found on all sides. The same diabolical weapons, from poisoned gas and bombs thrown from the air down to the worst of all, the spreading of lies, were used by all the fighting parties without any exception, of whatever race or nation whatsoever. And in every one of those nations there were heroes and cowards, in every one there were masses who blindly followed the same empty national phrases, in every one the wildest instincts of revenge and greediness were awakened, in every one there were found also examples of human love and kindness, even in the midst of fighting, not only

7. Einführung in die Phänomenologie der Religion, 1925. Introd.

8. Historisches Jahrbuch der Görres-Gesellschaft, 1932, p. 42.

towards comrades but also towards the enemy, and in every country there were numerous men and especially women, who devoted themselves with utter unselfishness and self-sacrifice to the help of the sick and wounded, widows and orphans ; and in every country there were also to be found those hyenas in human shape, to whom war and massacre were nothing but a welcome chance for profit-making and usury. And the imperialists of all countries worked into each other's hands. The German enemies of peace had no better allies than the enemies of peace in England and France. And priests of all creeds were blessing the instruments of murder in every country.

Then came the "peace", and this peace was, nay is, nothing but a preparation for a new war, and this "peace" has brought hunger and misery over the whole world, and suffering is not limited to one nation, but has taken hold of every nation and every country in the world. Thus war and peace seemed to show nationalism at its highest, and yet behind this nationalism the idea of internationalism was clearly visible.

Even the tendency to heated nationalism, racial pride and race hatred, so prevalent in the Germany of to-day, is by no means a German peculiarity, but is entirely human. Every great nation is inclined to consider itself the "chosen people" of God, and at lower stages of culture every small tribe will look down upon its neighbours with more or less contempt. For Greeks and Romans all other peoples were "barbarians", as for the orthodox Hindu every non-Hindu is a "mleccha". Both in India and in China the aboriginal tribes are considered as stupid and wicked. The Roman general Quintilian Varus said of the inhabitants of Germania : "It is true, they are men, but except the voice and the limbs of the body they have nothing of human beings in them." As late as 1848 the French philosopher Montesquieu said of the Negroes : "One cannot well imagine that God who is so wise, should have put a soul, moreover an immortal soul, into an entirely black body. It is impossible to think, that these people are human beings." Daniel Defoe, in his satire *The true-born Englishman* (1801), has already ridiculed the English race pride. At that time the race argument was chiefly used to prove the inferiority of the "Celtic" Irishman, as to-day it is used against the coloured races of the East. As Rabindranath Tagore, in his remarkable letter to Professor Gilbert Murray⁹ has lately said : "Just as whenever we go out fishing

we are inclined to regard fishes as the least sensitive of all living creatures, so it becomes quite pleasant to loot the Orient, if only we can make our own moral justification easy by relegating coloured races to the lowest groupings of mankind."

At lower stages of culture also it is generally the oppressed and exploited who are hated by their oppressors. What is called "race instinct" is more often than not an aversion against people of a foreign language, of different habits, living under different economic conditions. The cattle breeding Hottentot hates and despises the starved Bushman hunter who is of the same race with him. What is called "race hatred" is often nothing but hatred of the neighbour who threatens the hunting grounds or the cattle-pens of another tribe. And what is called "race prejudice" is the prejudice of any group of men, whether related to one another or not, whose members always think themselves better than those of any other group.

All these hatreds, jealousies and feelings of superiority between groups of men are all the stronger, the more primitive and the more ignorant people are. Only the casual visitor of a foreign country will rush into generalisations, and ascribe all faults he finds among the persons he happened to meet, to the whole population. The first impression of a traveller who comes into contact with exotic or primitive people, is that of an apparent uniformity, as if the individuals were all alike. It is only after closer acquaintance that he will find, that not only among higher civilized nations, but also among the most primitive peoples, there are not only individual differences in bodily appearance, but even more so as regards intellectual and moral character. This is the experience of all missionaries who have had occasion to live among the so-called "savages" for a great number of years.

Ignorance is certainly the cause of many of the prejudices against alien races and peoples. In a lecture on the Practical Value of Anthropology, held at Cambridge University in 1904, Sir Richard Temple, for many years Editor of the *Indian Antiquary*, has said :

"In a long experience of alien races, and of those who have had to govern and deal with them, all whom I have known to dislike the aliens about them, or to be unsympathetic, have been those that have been ignorant of them ; and I have never yet come across a man who really knew an alien race, that had not, unless actuated by race jealousy, a strong bond of sympathy with them. Familiarity breeds contempt, but it is knowledge that breeds respect, and it is all the same whether the race be black, white, yellow or red, or whether

it be cultured or ignorant, civilized or semi-civilized, or downright savage."¹⁰

IV.

Acknowledging the unity of man does not certainly mean denying the great differences that actually exist between the races and peoples of the earth and which separate them from one another, just as there exist the greatest differences between individuals. It is, alas, true that to some extent we are all strangers to each other. There are limits to our understanding of even our nearest and dearest, our brothers and sisters, our wives and husbands, our sons and daughters; how much more then of the men and women of other countries, nations, and stages of culture. Yet, on the other hand, there is so much of the conscious and unconscious in the soul of every man, that it makes it possible for him, if only he tries to dive into the depths of his own ego, to enter into the thoughts and feelings even of the most foreign soul.

In one sense, every human individual is a cosmos by itself, living his or her life as something unique and singular in an isolation and loneliness that may at moments become terrifying. On the other hand, it is equally true that this individual does not exist except as a member of a greater human Society, and as a link in an endless chain of past and future generations.

Biologically, every human individual is determined by a hereditary substance which links him to a long line of ancestors, and thus connects him with those who have the same ancestors, that is to say, with a certain race, and finally with the "human race". That the latter is not a mere phrase, but the expression of a biological fact, is admitted even by Fritz Lenz, a staunch advocate of the racial theory, and a champion of the Nordic race, who yet says: "Presumably all men have the greater part of their hereditary substance in common; it is quite possible, that the differences of the races depend only on a small part of the inherited predispositions, so that the main portion of the hereditary substance has nothing to do with racial differences."¹¹

Sociologically, the same individual is determined by the history, traditions, and cultural achievements of past generations without

¹⁰ See Indian Antiquary 34, 1905, p. 132 ff.

¹¹ Baur-Fischer-Lenz, Menschliche Erblchkeitslehre I, 573.

number, which make him a member of a society of men who share the same history, traditions and cultural achievements, that is to say, of a certain *tribe*, or *people*, or *nation*, or *religious community*, and, though more distantly, of the great family of man. That this also is more than a mere phrase, is proved by well attested facts of prehistory, ethnology, and universal history, which show that, through the centuries and milleniums, many races and peoples have contributed to produce what is called human culture.

We are inclined to underrate the achievements even of the earliest human inhabitants of our planet. Already the brain capacity of palaeolithic man is a sure sign of his intelligence ; and his achievements, such as the invention of instruments for producing fire, all kinds of tools and weapons, the art of finding and preparing food, etc., are the very foundation of our higher culture, and proof of no mean intelligence. It has been rightly said that "it requires far more intelligence to roam about in the wilds in quest of every kind of food and to find it, than to get up in the morning, eat a meal of bought produce, take a tram, punch or even issue tickets all day, and end up with ready-made amusements." ¹²

Of what race the first inventors of the carriage on wheels, of the canoe, and of the plough, the first tainers of domestic animals, the first builders of houses of wood and stone were, and to which people they belonged, we do not know, but we do know that without their achievements all higher culture would have been impossible.

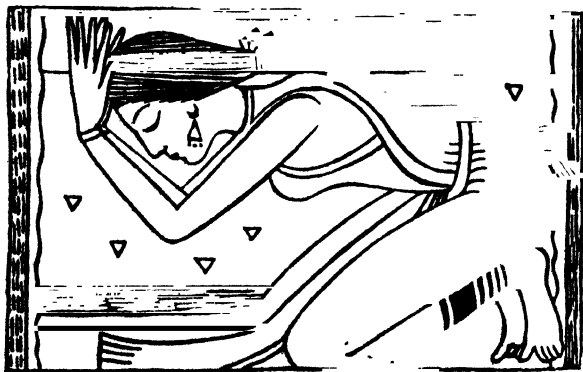
From history we know, that among the creators and bearers of this higher culture there were Babylonians and Assyrians, Egyptians, Phenicians, Hebrews, and peoples of China, India and Persia, Greeks and Romans, long before the present European nations began to take their share in it. It has been rightly said by the great Indian scientist Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose : "Nothing can be more vulgar or more untrue than the ignorant assertion that the world owes its progress of knowledge to any particular race. The whole world is inter-dependent and a constant stream of thought has, throughout the ages, enriched the common heritage of mankind." ¹³

What I then wish to emphasize, and what I hope to have proved even in these few pages, is that our conviction of the unity of mankind is not the outcome of a sentimental or moralizing vein, but is firmly

12. A. M. Hocart, the Progress of Man, London 1933, p. 31.

13. Malaviya Commemoration Volume, Benares 1932, p. 15.

based on scientific facts. While the belief in the absolute superiority of one race, the Nordic, is, as Rosenberg himself rightly calls it, a "myth", our belief in a Unity that lies behind and above all the great differences of nations and races, is supported by well-established facts of anthropology and ethnology, geography, prehistory and history, psychology, and even biology.





PL. III.

SARASWATI

(Stucco work on the wall of Modern School, Delhi.)

Size : 7 ft. x 4 ft.

Artist : *Ram Kink*

AND THIS IS AN ENDLESS WONDER

Once again I wake up when the night has waned,
when the world opens all its petals once more,—
and this is an endless wonder.
Vast islands have sunk in the abyss unnamed,
stars have been beggared of the last flicker of their light,
countless epochs have lost all their ladings,
world-conquerors have vanished into the shadow of a name
behind dim legends,
great nations raised their towers of triumph
as a mere offering to the unappeasable hunger of the dust,—
among this dissolving crowd of the discarded
my forehead receives the consecration of light,—
and this is an endless wonder.
I stand for another day with the Himalayas,
with the constellations of stars ;
I am here where in the surging sea-waves
the infuriate dance of the Terrible is rhythmed with his
boisterous laughter ;
the centuries on which have flashed up and foundered
kingly crowns like bubbles
have left their signature on the bark of this aged tree,
where I am allowed to sit under its ancient shade for
one more day, —
and this in an endless wonder.

Rabindranath Tagore

THE GOD OF THE GITA, VASUDEVA-VISHNU-NARAYANA AND HIS ORIGIN

Prof. R. Otto

- I. Narasimha.
- II. The type of the religion of the Gopas.
 - (1) The men of Krishna.
 - (2) Their *daiva'tam*.
 - (3) Krishna's sermon.
 - (4) "Might" as mountain-god.
- III. The idea of Vishnu.
 - (1) Vishnu as pervading "might".
 - (2) Vishnu and Brahman.
- IV. Vasudeva.
 - (1) The root *vas*.
- V. Narayana.
 - (1) *nara* and Nara.
 - (2) Narayana, first explanation.
 - (3) Narayana, second explanation. The God of autumn.
 - (4) Roots of the later Krishna-bhakti.
 - (5) Baladeva.
 - (6) West Aryan parallels.
 - (7) Assimilation of the myth of the wide-striding dwarf.
 - (8) *Satupatha-brahmana* 12. 6. 1.
- VI. Correction of our title.

IN later times the great world god Vishnu became identical with Narayana and Vasudeva. From which root did this God-idea originate? What is the relation between Vishnu and Vasudeva and Narayana, and how is their identification to be explained?

1. Narasimha

Vishnu is already known to the hymn-collection of the Vedas. But here he is distinctly a God coming from other circles and not from the original Vedic circles. As Upa-Indra, as a *co-Indra*, he is received almost hesitatingly. Narayana and Vasudeva are still unknown.

One of the most ancient passages in which the latter two are clearly combined with Vishnu, is the great litany in the *Taittiriya-ananyaka* 10. verse 1, 6 :

"We worship Narayana, we consecrate our mind to Vasudeva, therefore may Vishnu make us prosper."

There follows a corresponding worship for "him with the diamond claws" and "him with the sharp teeth"; both refer to Narasimha here. Narasimha is worshipped separately here, and is not yet identical with Vishnu. But certainly here he is considered as a member of the same *class* of gods as Vishnu-Narayana-Vasudeva ; that means he is considered as a being related to them, belonging to them. For it is clear that the whole hymn puts together the single names of the gods, according to the relations of the bearers. Later on, Narasimha is attracted and absorbed by Vishnu ; he becomes an *avatura* of the greater god Vishnu, who has been a member of the system for a long time. But originally and for a long time he had his own circle of worshippers, in which Narasimha was the Great God : the proof of it are the Nrisimha Upanishads which are still preserved (Deussen, p. 753). The reason for his being identified with Vishnu instead of Rudra, for example, must have been that from the beginning he belonged to the Vishnu type, not to the Rudra type.

With this special type of god, I have dealt in my book "Deity and deities of the Ancient Aryans" p. 83. Of which kind this type was, is still to be seen as regards Narasimha, because of the favourable circumstance that in the *Brihad-jabala-Upanishad* in passage 6, he is spoken of in an especially clear way (*Saiva-upanishads*, ed. A. M. Sastri, Madras, 1925). This passage gives us the firm foundation for our whole essay.

The Narasimha, to which the brahmin Karuna goes here, is a *tree* on the bank of the river, or more correctly, the *numen* which is immanent as potency of "might" in this tree, and for its sake the tree is revered and feared. The root of this conception of a god is the idea of "might", the idea of magical might which is in certain important objects of nature, which pervades and fills the object, which sticks to it as a numinous power and which, at the same time, is personified as a *nara*, as a spirit, dwelling in this object. The characteristic of such a cult and such a being—different from the Rudra type—is the immanence-unity of this powerful being with its bearer. It is worshipped together with its bearer, and it is worshipped at the same time in and with its bearer. He who touches it, at

the same time touches the numen itself borne by it, contained in it, pervading and filling it, one with it.

From such an original idea of immanent numinous "potence", at first tied to a "potence bearer", the idea of Vishnu itself, as well as that of Narayana, and perhaps that of Vasudeva too, seems to have originated. And this relation of the type seems to me to be the reason for their uniting and at last for their becoming synonymous names of one and the same great god-being.

II. The Religion of the Gopas

1. When Duryodhana and Arjuna come to Krishna to ask him for help in their quarrel against each other, he grants his men to Duryodhana, but himself to Arjuna (*Udyoga-parvan* 6, 157). Elsewhere his men are called Bhojas, Andhakas, Vrishnis : simple names for tribes or clans. It is remarkable that Krishna characterises them here with the names of *gopas* and *narayanas*. These expressions cannot be names of clans : they characterise the Vrishnis in another way. Krishna's Vrishnis are *gopas* as well as *narayanas*. It is clear that both are to mean something special, they are to distinguish the Vrishnis from other tribes gathering for the Kuru battle, they are simple "cowherds", that means half nomadic tribes ; while, on the other hand, in a special way they differ from the others in their *cult*.

Both characteristics, and in a similar connection, are to be found again in the *Hari-vamsa* ch. 72, as the characteristics of the Vrishnis. And, at the same time, more distinctly than in the above passage, there is stated here what the matter is with the two.

Here we notice a distinct consciousness of a special differentiation, social as well as religious, and both characteristics are closely connected with each other. Krishna represents here the ancient *herdsmen* and their way of living against invading *agriculture*, and at the same time he passionately represents the ancient *cult* and the ancient *gods* of his tribe.

2. *Hari-vamsa* 72, tells how some members of his tribe were going to give a festival to the strange god Indra. In chapter 75, Krishna passionately protests against it. "We are herdsmen, we roam about the forest living on the products of our cows. The farmer, the errant merchant may do their work as they like, they may serve their gods. Our trade is rearing cows. Cows, forests, and mountains are sacred (*daivatam*) to us." He asks them to give

festival, not to Indra, but to their own deities, according to tradition, namely the festival of the autumnal lustration (*niranjana*) of the cows, which are to go out grazing in the meadows, in forests and mountains, after the long dry summer and the rainy season when they had to remain inside, and who therefore need ritual cleaning and new "potence". This festival of lustration is at the same time the sacrificial festival for the numina, owning and giving "potence", for the numina of the *mountains*, carrying forests, meadows and pastures and filling them with their *vituality*. "For these are our refuge."

The veneration of mountains of the gopas is of a special kind. Here the mountain is not worshipped because of the sublime impression it makes, but because it is a "carrier of might", because, like a *narasimha*-tree, it is filled with potency-numen, pervading from it into forests, trees, meadows, grass, cows, filling and pervading it itself. The mountains, in a strange way, become themselves a kind of spirits—spirits tied to their carriers, being indetical with them, in such a way that they themselves are still called mountains and, at the same time, they are different from the material mountains in so far as they can take another shape and form, and can, in such a new form, haunt "their own slopes". For such a relation the term *deha* "body" already emerges. Their natural "body" is the natural mountain, but, if it wishes, the "might" dwelling in the mountain can show itself in another *rupa* and with another *deha* by means of its *māyā*, of its power of transformation.

I suppose that such numina were called *naras* and *vishnavas* and that from such *naras* and *vishnavas* the great god Nara and Vishnu arose. The chapters from the *Hari-vamsa* which were quoted here seem to confirm my conjecture.

3. Krishna says (ch. 73, 3812):

" . . . the mountains are our firm refuge." Then he continues describing these "mountains", according to ancient *sruti*, ancient tradition:

"The ancient legend (*srutyante*) says that the 'mountains', taking other forms, can roam about their own slopes in this wood, taking now this form, now that.

"They become lions (cp. *narasimha*) with long manes, or tigers with claws (cp. 'with diamond claws'), and thus they protect their woods, frightening those who fell trees.

"For as soon as those who live on the carriers of the forests (on the mountains) want to do harm to the trees, they kill such scoundrels who sin like cannibals.

"The Brahmins may sacrifice with *mantras* (sacrifice according to the Vedas), the farmers may sacrifice to the furrow: we, the herdsmen, sacrifice to the mountains. The mountain with its forest is worthy of sacrifice to us.

"So it seems right to me. Therefore, oh herdsmen, the mountain-sacrifice may be made now.

"The auspicious sacrifice may be made at the *sthana*, at a tree or at a mountain.

"There sacrificial animals are to be killed spreading the killed on a beautiful *ayataka*."

And now he asks that the cows, laden with *autumnal* flowers shall walk around the mountain in order to be led in the forests to new pastures. For "this lovely autumn is come when the showers of the clouds (of the previous rainy season) are gone, bringing sweet juicy grass to the cows."

And then there follows an extremely vivid description of the newly rising vitality in forest and field, in river and lake, in plants and animals and men. This description here is not only a beautiful piece of bucolic lyric, but it shall make listener understand what, at the end, will be the climax. We shall hear that later on. First let us follow the line of the simpler idea of "might" or "potence".

4. Krishna succeeds appealing to tradition and the religion of the forefathers. The invading Indra is defeated. The mountain-sacrifice and the lustration of the cows are made. The legend makes Krishna himself become identical with the mountain—a later version easily to be distinguished, so that the original conceptions can be recognised. At the end of the sacrifice Krishna appears "in the shape of a mountain", at the same time standing on the summit of the mountain. But as v. 3890 shows clearly, it is the "mountain" itself, which standing upon itself, appears to the herdsmen in a special *deha*. He repeats and confirms what Krishna had said in his sermon, in a voice rising from the interior of the mountain (though the speaker stands at the same time on the summit) that he and he alone is to be worshipped by the herdsmen.

"From this time you shall sacrifice to me alone if you care for your cows. I am your highest god who mercifully grants your wishes."

The sacrifice ends with processions and merry games which the god watches, and at the end "the 'mountain' with this body (that means the body he had taken by *māyā* to appear on the summit) became invisible again."

III. The Idea of Vishnu

(1) Spirits of this kind, which are numinous "might-potentialities", in half identity with their bearers, worshipped in them and with them, sitting in mountains, rocks, trees, etc., are typically different from spirits which, like the *rudras*, have originated from the impression of the fearful of places or events. They have a concrete bearer, their *adhara*, whom they pervade as numinous might-potentiality ; at first by their immanence in, and half-identity with, these, they are immanent spirits. A name for "spirits" was *nara* and *purusha*, and so spirits of this class could be called *naras* or *purushas* too. But in their special function of indwelling spirits, as I suppose, they were called *vishnus*. The specific character of the developed idea of (a) the great Vishnu and (b) the etymon, *vishnu* itself seems to demonstrate that.

(a) The great Vishnu has always been understood as the great "Pervader". In *Nrisimha-purva-tapaniya* 2, 4, there is written: "Why is he called Maha-Vishnu ? (Because he is he) who *pervades* all worlds and suffers himself to be pervaded by them as oil permeates the sesame-dough by which it is permeated."

This is the same as the little tree-*narasimha*, or the spirits which pervade the "mountain" and which can haunt "their own slopes", as the great Vishnu can be above and outside this world. Because of this pervading strength, as I have explained in my book *Deities of the Aryans*, Vishnu is especially the god of the *avatars*, of the *avesas*, the god who is present in nature and arcas and who is worshipped with them and in them, the god of the *salagrama* stones and the *tulasi* plants and other fetiches. And the etymon *vishnu* itself seems to point to this characteristic immanent might.

(b) In the *Brihad-devata* II, 69, the word *vishnu* is explained from the root *vish* or *viś* or *vevish* which all three mean "to pervade". Because of the *ś* the root *viś* must be excluded. Apte quotes a root *vish* "to pervade" in his dictionary. From such a root *vish* the *Ahir-budhnya-samhita* 52, 39, explains the word *vishnu*. But in the Mahabharata *vishnu* is often connected with *jishnu*, with *sakishnu*, *brajispnu* (H. V. 2503). In the same way, *vishnu* may be composed from *vi* and the ending *snu*. Oldenberg, (rejecting his former explanation from *vi-sanu*,) supposes the latter. *vi* means "asunder". Therefore Oldenberg supposes that Vishnu means he who stretches himself wide asunder, and he thinks that the idea of Vishnu origi-

nated from the impression of the width of space ; it was supposed to be divine, idolised in Vishnu. I think this to be too much for primitive sentiment. Such abstract things as these were hardly imagined under the extremely real conception of a Vishnu. But *vi* also means "through" as in the word *vibhu*. A Vishnu would then not be "one who stretches himself wide", but "one who stretches himself through something", a *vyapin* as Vishnu is constantly called. Now this is characteristic of this might-potentiality of which we are speaking here. One could not have named it better than by the name Vishnu in this sense. Not in abstract conceptions, nor in speculative conceptions of the world, the name of Vishnu has its root, but in the most primitive and at the same time very common original religious conception, namely in the wide-spread conception of "might" (*numen*), dwelling in certain things, pervading and penetrating them. The mountain spirit of our above mentioned legend, the tree-spirit *narasimha*, they are still far away from the idea of the great divine strength of Vishnu, pervading the universe as an interior principle of life "as oil the cake". But they are indeed already *vibhu*, *vyapin*, *vishnu*, they are pervaders. As the great world-god Vishnu has the world as his "body", they have their carrier as their body, their receptacle, their vessel. As between Vishnu and the world there is a relation of intimate connection of being, just so with them, there is a relation between themselves and their object. And as, on the other hand, Vishnu is not simply identical with the world, but surpasses it, even so these *vishnavas* do on a small and primitive scale.

Some names, mentioned in the Vishnu hymns, refer to this primitive sphere of immanent might-numina and their respective carriers. They may all be spelt capital and then mean God and world relations, and they may be spelt small and mean quite primitive immanence relations between might-numina and their carriers.

Vishnu's name-lists are instructive. Some of these names are simple synonyms of the numinous-magical power itself, without personification, as *tejas*, *tapas*, *ojas*, *sahas*, etc. Others nominate the might-carrier: *yasoollura*, *urjaspati*. To this category also belong *sripati*, *lakshmipati*, *sri-nivasa*, *lakshminivasa*, or simply *nivasa* and *adhara*. In others there distinctly appears the fetichistic carrier of the numen sheltering the numen immanently as a name for a numen itself: *nyagrodha*, *udumbara*, *asvattha*, *arushadha*. A *sri-vriksha* is at first simply a tree, containing *sri*, that means the numinous healing

power: it becomes the god's name. A *vishnu-saila* was at first certainly nothing but a rock, pervaded and possessed by a *vishnu*; in H. V. 2403 the word is a name of the god himself. The same it is with *altri*, *giri*, *gিরirupin*, *salagrama*, *salarupin*. It is similar when the numen gets animal-names: *vyala*, lion, swan, monkey, snake: we remember the wild animals in which "the mountains" could appear. In such a connection an epithet such as *kausika* becomes comprehensible, meaning hidden in a *kosa*, a receptacle. The "might", that is the owner of the "might", also means the term *sat-nivasa*. Here there may be asked earnestly if *sat-nivasa* did not at first mean quite concretely an exterior concrete numinous *object* such as a magic tree or a spirit tree, a thing in which *sat* is sitting. Certainly *sat-nivasa* did not originate in a high speculative sphere, but is also an ancient expression belonging to this primitive magical conception. For this *sat* is synonym of *asu* and from the same root as that word. Like *asu*, *sat* is that magical potentiality, giving life, strength, growth, *bhuti*, good, thriving and being as well-being. And finally the word contained in *sātvata* will have to be interpreted like that too. If *bhagavat* belongs *bhāgavata*, *satvat* belongs to *sātvata*. If *bhāgavatas* are worshippers of a *bhagavat*, *sātvatas* are worshippers of a *satvat*, that means of one owning *sat*. No wonder that the *sātvatas* belong to our circle, for no name could fit better the idea of spirits and gods cherished here than that. A *Satvat* is the high world god Vishnu, bearing the *sat* of the world in him. But a *satvat* is already a *govardhana*, giving the *asu* to cows and men and making them thrive.

(2) Thus it is comprehensible that the idea of Brahman attracted the conception of Vishnu and amalgamated with it. For both are "might" ideas. The *brahman* is the hidden "might", first in sacrifice, then in all numinous appearances of the world, at last everywhere in the world. Much more easily than for instance the Rudra idea, the Vishnu idea could therefore be amalgamated and identified with the Brahman idea.

And what we have heard previously about the "spirit", which in reality is the mountain spirit, but which, at the same time, may also appear in "any shape", especially in the shape of *wild animals* haunting it, that explains the strange passage in Rig Veda 1, 154, 2: "Vishnu, who haunts the mountains like the terrible roaming wild animal." In our text too there is written that these mountain spirits taking whatever shape they like "roam on their own slopes as lions and tigers".

IV. Vasudeva

1. Vishnu becomes Vasudeva. Bhandarkar and Jacobi have demonstrated that Vasudeva is not a patronym for *Vāsudeva*, but that, on the contrary, Vasudeva as the name of Krishna's father has been etymologized from Krishna's epithet *Vāsudeva*. The real name of Krishna's father was Anakadundubhi, H. V. verse 1924, verse 9040. What may have been the meaning of *Vāsudeva* originally and how shall we explain that it is synonymous with Vishnu ?

According to our opinion, a *vishnu* was at first an immanent "might" in an object. Immanent means dwelling in something. To dwell in something means *vas*. From *vas* derives *vāsa*, dwelling, in which the root-sound is gunated. Accordingly *vāsu* must mean a dweller. So a *vāsu-deva* is in fact simply a synonym of Vishnu: both originally mean dwelling, pervading might-potentiality. The word *vāsu* may also occur isolated (Apte, sub+*vāsu*) as an epithet for Krishna. A *vāsudeva* is only a fuller form for it, namely, a dwelling-spirit. The *Ahīr-buddhīya-saṃhitā* says (p. 550, verse 65) :

"As the universe is immanent in him, and as he is immanent in the universe : this is the sense of *Vāsu*." Here *vāsu* is etymologized as the immanent dwelling being with the help of the root *vas* (cp. *Udyoga* p. 2561 : *vāsanāt sarvabhūtānām, Vāsudevas tato vedyah*). It is later theology to think here at once of the everywhere immanent god of the universe, but the original meaning of *vas* and *vāsu* is preserved. Again a passage from *Hari-vamśa* teaches us in a distinct way which primitive conception is the origin of such a *vas*. In H. V. 7610, Krishna gives boons to the mountain Paripatra : He says :

"Below you there live (*nivasanti*) great devils. They have been defeated by me, and now they shall no more come out of you, after having been suppressed by me. The door being closed to them they shall perish at my order. And (in their place) I myself shall be hidden in you (*tvayi sannihita*). As master of those fearful ones, I shall dwell in you (*nivatsyāmi*). He who, filled with bhakti, has a stone image made of you (that means of the numen) and who will serve me, he will come to me." And from that hour the master of the gods (Krishna) became hidden in the mountain, and of stones (of the mountain) one makes an image and serves him, with self-restraint and desiring the Vishnu-world.

The parallel to that which happened to the mountain Govardhana

is here apparent. Here, too, the Krishna cult is identified with the cult of an ancient mountain numen, immanent in the mountain, worshipped in fetiches from the stones of the mountain, and the relation of this numen to the mountain and to the fetiches is expressed by the root *vas*. Perhaps one may point to something else. When the Sagarides (*Vanaparvan* 8800) root up the ground in order to search for their father's sacrificial horse which has run away, deep in the interior of the ground, they meet a *kapila*, a horrible being, which burns them to ashes because they have sacrilegiously touched its own dwelling-place. This being "was called *vasudeva*". Probably for the teller Vasudeva was identical with the great world-god Vasudeva, immanent in the universe. But we may suppose that originally simply the "*vāsu*" of this place, immanent in the interior of the earth, the ghost haunting it, was meant. He himself is hurt when his *deha* is hurt.

V. Narayana

It cannot be doubted that Narayana belongs somehow or other to Nara. Nara and Narayana are two closely connected deities in the epic poem. As they are strangers to the Vedic circle, one tries to fit them into the system with the dogmatic at one's disposal. Either they are declared as *purve devas*, that means "ancient gods" (for example Drona p. 9480 *purvadevanam paraman*), or one makes them old rishis. But in their real home they were highest names of gods. What do those names mean, and what is the relation between *nara* and *narayana* ?

(1) *nara* means man. But I think I have shown at another place that in mythological texts *nara* must not be translated simply as "man". They are "men" of a special kind. The "man" sitting in the sun, the ether, the fire, the moon, the eye, the heart, the echo, the shade, etc., is no man, but a "spirit", and, in a higher rank, a god. So *narasimha* does not mean "man-lion", but "spirit-lion". He is a *nara*, a dwelling-spirit immanent in the tree, who, as a *kumarupin* (as our above mentioned immanent mountain-spirits), can come out of his *sthana* in the fearful *rupa* of a lion. Now from the general circle of *naras*, rises Nara, as Rudra from the circle of *rudras*, Vishnu from the circle of the *visnavas*. Then Nara is the high god. He occurs in theophorous names, for instance in Naradatta, which is synonymous with Devadatta, and which like that means Theodore, and Naragupta, Naravarman. As Nara, he is *narottama*, the highest of all *naras*, synonym

with *purushottama*, (H. V. 1. 1. 1. and in numerous initial formulas) and both are well-known synonyms and names for Vishnu Vasudeva.

(2) The condensation of *naras* may take place in the personal Nara. Besides another comprehension in impersonal form is possible. As the form *daivam* belongs to *deva*, the form *nāram* belongs to *nara*. As that means the comprehension of *devic* might in abstract form, *nāram* means *naric* might and being. It has been objected that *nāram* is not to be found elsewhere. That would not be surprising, for *nara* and Nara himself have been replaced by other epithets for spirits and gods later on. But *Bṛihad-brahma samita* 665, knows *nāram*, and it did not need to invent this word ad hoc, as it had the explanation of *narayana* by *nara* (instead of by *nāram*) at its disposal, and as it is exercised by itself. But it is more important that in the list of the Vishnu names in *Narada-panca-ratra* 4, 8, 120, which elsewhere too has ancient expressions, there is mentioned *nāraśāyin* as one of the Vishnu names. It seems to me that this can only mean "he who rests or dwells in a *nāram*" (or in a *naric* object, for instance in an old magic tree).

What is *narayana* then? *ayana* means place, dwelling-place (Apte, 3, place, site, abode), then *narayana* means, as a *bahuvrīhi*, "who has his dwelling-place in a *nāram* (for example in a numinous object of nature such as a *śalagrama* stone or in a tree or in the mountain Govardhana or in some nature fetich). Therefore *narayana* means nothing else but a *nāraśāyin*. And as the worshippers of Mahadeva, Vishnu, Siva, are called Mahadevas, Vaishnavas, Saivas, the *gopas* worshipping *narayans* must be called *narayanas*. (The *vrddhi*-formation in those forms cannot be apparent in *narayana* = "narayana worshipper" alone, because *narayana* as an object of veneration was already itself formed by a *vrddhi*).

But perhaps such an explanation is not deep enough. One ought to beware of searching for the meaning of ancient names of gods in speculative heights if primitive explanations are available. But, on the other hand, one can miss their sense if indeed they originate from a degree of higher religious intuition. And perhaps that is the case with *Narayana*. For this purpose we must go on examining our text in the *Harivamsa*.

After Krishna has summoned the people for the mountain sacrifice, he starts an excited vivid description of life newly awaking everywhere in the refreshed autumnal nature after the deadly dryness of summer and the following showers, closing with these words :

"Now the devas rouse him who during the showers was fast asleep, the Highest of the thirty gods."

He speaks of Vishnu-Narayana. An ancient tradition of its own must have been preserved here, for the quoted sentence contradicts the later Vishnu theology, and seen from it, it is a limitation of Vishnu's majesty. According to later conception, Vishnu is indeed he who falls asleep at this time and awakes again, but these times of Vishnu's sleep and awakening are the great *world epochs* when the universe wraps itself up in its latent state in order to come forth after immense aeons of rest of the world. But in our passage, only the *every year* renewing sleep of nature is meant at the time of dryness, the waiting rest at the time of the showers, when man and animal, confined to their pens, are waiting, idle and pent up, for the new-blossoming of life in the refreshed and reviving autumn time after the months of rain.

This quite archaic conception is to be found repeatedly in *Hari-vamsa*. Thus in H. V. ch. 154, Pradyumna vividly describes the rainy season. He continues :

"Now sleep has overcome the shelter of the world, the lord, the Upendra (this is Vishnu)."

And Indra, paying homage to Krishna, offers him the pact : he himself would reign during the rainy season, but Krishna, that is Narayana, is to reign in *autumn* when everything grows again and thrives. Then Indra describes autumn and closes :

"When you will have risen from sleep, there comes the fertile autumn (H. V.)."

And in *Anusana-parvan* 139, the conception of Narayana, as the reviving god of the seasons, is also apparent. At first Krishna-Narayana appears here as a great magician, performing a mere trick of his magic power before the watching *rishis*, first blighting a large blossoming mountain and then reviving it, filling it again with flowers and trees and the voices of the newly awakened animals and birds. But the admiring glorifications show what is the meaning :

"You are winter and summer, you are the rainy season."

That means that this is an echo of an original personification of a "might", blighting the vegetation in summer in order to revive it again in the rainy season.

The sense of this resting god awaking again in autumn is clear at once. The conception originates from the ideas of immanent "might" in mountain, forest, tree, lives of men and animals, which, at the same

time, is the *asu*, the life, the wonderful secret vitality, hidden in things. This "might" has its yearly period of expansion, rest, new awaking, and new expansion. Those single potentialities have become *one* great power in the whole nature, the single *naras*, *vishnus*, *vāsus* have become One Vishnu, Nara, Vasu. When he rests, nature rests, when he awakes, nature awakes ; that is the regular course of the periods every year. The primitive cult of the might-bearing mountains, trees, forests, etc., of the might-potentialities dwelling in them, has developed to a higher degree of cult towards the One, immanent everywhere in nature, filling it with life, reviving, carrying it.

Developed—so we say lightly. But as it is with the primitive idea of "might" generally speaking, it is also the same with it in a higher degree. The word development contributes only little to understanding. Here it is a question of intuitions of special kind, which one can notice, register, put in order in their connections, but how and wherefrom they originate cannot be explained. The transition from the "might" of life and blessing immanent in the *govardhana* and his protecting forests and meadows to the intuition of the only God and god of the universe living everywhere in nature and everywhere in the world, unfolding it from itself and folding it together again, comprising it in his own being, is not "development," but a new undefinable intuition, presupposing the intuitive *prophet*, whether his name was Krishna or something else.

Perhaps this idea of a resting and newly awaking god throws some new light on the word Narayana and on the connection of Nara and Narayana. The ending *ayana* means belonging to a *gotra* and hence origin and descent from the ancestor of the *gotra* ; so it has patronymical sense. I remember a conversation I had with Oldenberg many years ago, in which he explained *narayana* as "descendant of *nara*." He thought *nara* meant the *purusha* in the *purusha-sukta*, and *narayana* the principle of the world originating from the *purusha*. He thought the word *narayana* to be the product of a higher speculation which had come into popular use. This seems too high to me again and too abstract. But what on one side was symbolised by the idea of a sleeping and again awaking god, that might also have been symbolised by the ideas of a god who vanishes, rests, retires, and a son or descendant who now begins his new young reign as the *yuvuraja* of the past king. There seems to be still an echo of it in the story that Indra, having been defeated, consecrates young Krishna as a young King who is about to rule (H. V. 4004).

This consecration means at the same time filling the world with new power. This becomes clear at the end of the passage about Krishna's baptism as king:

"Earth delivers itself from the water that has flooded it, the winds blow softly again, the sun follows his course without interference, the long vanished moon shines again, The plagues (fever during the rainy season) vanish, the trees bud again, the *world is filled* with ambrosia at Krishna's '*king's baptism*'."

By a magical act the young king of life and, at the same time, the world get new strength. This corresponds to world-wide conceptions: by cultural and magical means, one tries everywhere to give new strength to the newly rising life of nature, personified in the form of a god or a hero.

In the same line there is also the legend of Krishna's childhood and the cult of Balakrishna (in which, in a silly manner, people wanted to see the legend of Christ's childhood). What is told of Krishna here, is evidently transformation of ancient rites and myths which once were consecrated to a *spirit of vegetation*. The newly awaking vitality is the "child". The manipulations and rites, nursing and encouraging them, are expressed in the care of a child exposed to danger, surrounded by enemies, to protect it from persecutions. So there originates a myth of the "child" which, at the same time, attracts other myths and amalgamates them. At last it is transferred, as a legend of childhood, to a leader and prophet, who, in connection with such religion, had played an important part ; and he himself is raised to be the god whose cult he has promoted.

At the same time it is easily comprehensible how the figure of Nara, who had retired, must fade before that of Narayana, who is the god in whom one is interested, from whom one expects life and existence and the present goods, who alone is addressed in the cult, and by whose vitality one wants to be filled.

4. In this relation between Nara and Narayana, we could easily recognise the root for the strange teaching of the "*vyuhas*", which later on is characteristic of the *Bhāgavata* religion. Indeed Nara and Narayana would be as these *vyuhas*—a "pulling asunder" of one and the same original being in two *hypostasis*. And in the way in which the young god is celebrated here, one can see the root of the later *bhakti*. This god is worshipped by roaming about the forests in ecstatic joy. Thus Narada, Bhagavat's *bhakta*, afterwards roams about the country with his *vina* ; in lovely forests, at the foot of the

trees, he meets the god. Thus later on, filled with *bhakti*, the singers, the alvars, go from place to place in a state of ecstasy. Thus Caitanya roams about the Vrindavana, imitating his model Krishna. To the exciting *kirtana* is always a characteristic of the *bhakti* cult.

3. I would like to express another supposition. Krishna's brother Samkarshana-Baladeva-Balabhadra, at the same time his other self and play-mate, leaves his brother for some time to return to the herdsmen from a distance, in order to roam with them again about forests and mountains and to be loved, praised, and honoured by the herdsmen as Krishna himself. Perhaps the motive of such a tale is that, besides the conception of the sleeping and waking god or of the god returning in his *descendant*, there was also, as a parallel symbol, the conception of two *brothers*: the one who goes abroad and remains there, the other who comes back in his place, taking up the reign and representing the newly operating vitality (*bala*): Perhaps the name, which Samkarshana often has, indicates that: he is called Baladeva too. Perhaps originally a god Baladeva, the *deva*, who as the new one reproduces the strength of the old one and who sets it operate, was placed beside Vasudeva? Compare also H. V. verse 3778. Here had been told how Samkarshana was afraid of the demon Pralamba on whose back he was riding, and who suddenly under him had grown from a small size to huge height, and who was threatening him. Krishna asks him to recollect that he, Samkarshana, is also Narayana, and as a god he is to hit "balena" the demon's head. Then it goes on:

"Then he hit the demon's head with clenched fist, by his self-reflexion filled with *bala*, pervading the three worlds." It is interesting too that in *Karna-parva* 6, v. 143, Narayana's and Bala-bhadra's clans stand near one another.

6. Such ideas of immanent might and their personifications in spirits and gods were not only the property of the nomadic tribes near Mathura and Vrindavana. They are primeval. We may suppose that mythical figures such as we have found in Krishna's sermon were primeval Aryan and perhaps already pre-Aryan good (in spite of the subordinate part they play in the Veda). For these beings, born from immanent might, worshipped in tree, forest, meadow and wood, are distinctly related even in details with those figures which W. Mannhard has studied in his classical work "The Cult of Trees of the Germanic and their neighbour Tribes" (Berlin 1857). "The forest and tree-spirits as vegetation demons" dealt with in his 4th

chapter are nothing but our *naras*, *vishnus*, *narasimhas*, *vasus*, *narasayins*, *narayanas*, and the customs devoted to them are similar to those which have been preserved until now in India with the Krishna-janmashtami. Mannhardt says on page 155: "We see the soul of the tree understood as the genius of growth. But as in the yearly renovation of the vegetation in spring and their dying in autumn the change of the seasons is apparent, it is comprehensible that the conception of the demon of vegetation embodied in the tree easily becomes a personification of spring and summer (in our case of autumn), and he is called by that name too. The natural man, who is not accustomed to abstraction, to abstract distinctions, does not separate these various considerations, but vegetation, spring, summer (in our case autumn), and the protecting and representing tree-spirit are often melted into one single conception for him."

On p. 102, he quotes examples how such tree-spirits pass into forest-spirits, mountain-spirits, and field (and meadow) spirits. In his index on p. XII, he says: "The soul of the tree becomes the *universal vegetation-spirit* and passes into a personification of the *beautiful season*." Further on he shows how these figures originating from the immanent idea of "might", unite with all sorts of products of mythical fancy.

So it is likely that the great figure of the god of the Gita sprang from a *common ancient Aryan* root, with the only difference that in the east this root became procreative and led to the highest conception, while, in the west, it lost its numinous potentiality. (Here we have the case of "mounting and sinking-numina" which I have dealt with in chapter VI of my of book: "Gefühl des Überweltlichen").

7. That Krishna was a historical figure is not to be doubted. From the veils of the legend in H. V. there appear features of a comprehensible person, confirmed by historical analogies: a man in whom the ideals of his ancient tribe are alive, who saves his tribe and tears it out of the effects of a foreign invading culture destroying the life of the tribe, who becomes their leader and, at the same time, their religious hero, as the preserver, reformer, and reorganizer of the ancient cult of the tribe. He wishes his people to be *gopas* and remain roaming from forest to forest, and not to become despicable *glebae adscripti*, like Indra's servants; he wishes them to be and remain *narayanas*, not *mantra-yajnas* and *sita-yajnas* as the others. And as the ancient Jahve and Elohim, only by Moses' creation of a nation serving Jahve and in him united, in him newly created, becomes the great God

of the Old Testament, thus under Krishna's *gopas*, the figure of the sleeping-awaking autumn-god, rising indistinctly from *naras*, *vishnvas*, *narasimhas*, becomes Vishnu-Narayana-Vasudeva, who thus afterwards in the so-created community of the Bhagavatas grows to be the Isvara of the Gita.

8. Ancient cosmogonic myths of the tortoise and the boar had been connected with the figure of Prajapati (the first form of *avataras*). When Vishnu-Narayana had become the great world- and creator-god, they passed on to him. Probably much earlier, Vishnu had assimilated the ancient mythical fairy-tale of the dwarf, who deceiving his adversary wins the whole earth by means of his three giant-steps. Oldenberg seems to have proved convincingly that this tale has nothing to do with a "sun-god", but that originally it was a typical ancient magical and mythical fairy-tale. But the question is, how and in what sense could this fairy-tale be attached to Vishnu ?

In my book "Gefühl des Überweltlichen" p. iii, 2, I have explained why immanent strength-numina could be imagined by fancy in the shape of dwarfs. The story of the Vamana incarnation in H.V. 4265, seems to demonstrate in what sense the ancient fairy-tale of the three steps and the mighty strides was transferred to Vishnu. The "steps", of the ancient fairy-tale become here steps of the dwarf's *own growth*, steps of his *own expansion* and *pervading* of the world and so, simultaneously, of his owning the world.

"When the oath had been taken the dwarf became no-more-dwarf. Then the Lord showed his figure containing all *devas*. The earth as his feet, the sky as his head, sun and moon as his eyes . . . and verse 14310: As he is walking about the earth, sun and moon touch his breast. As he is walking on to the sky, they touch his hips. As he is walking to the highest place, they are at his feet."

We see the ancient mythical fairy-tale could affix itself when the idea of the immanent numinous might in tree, mountain, earth, stone, forest, nature, raised itself to the immanent world-power, gradually pervading all spheres, at last filling the Universe and taking possession of it. There again we have not only a mere and casual shifting of a mythical fairy-tale, but a great religious intuition of a deep kind, *submitting* the motives of a primitive mythical fairy-tale.

9. From that idea of penetrating, pervading, and taking possession of the world by an originally primitive imagined *vishnu-narayana*, already the most ancient passage, speaking of Narayana,

seems to testify to me: *satapatha-brahmana* 12, 6, 1. Here a *purusha* Narayana is spoken of, *purusha* being nothing else but *nara*, a mighty "spirit". He transcends all beings and becomes the Universe.

V. In a deeper sense the "origin" of the idea of the great god Vishnu is not that circle of primitive-magical ideas we have followed. They are only the strange mist which gradually something entirely different penetrates, viz. the idea of the transcendant-absolute numen. Born themselves from the first stirrings of numinous apperception, they became impulses for the latter idea to break through and to rise above them. The idea itself, however, does not *originate* out of them, and it is not their product. It has its root in the mysterious aptitude of the human spirit for something absolute, superior to the world. And only because of such a root it happened that behind the veils of primitive and mythical beginnings the great Isvara of the Gita came into the light. Philosophically this capacity was examined by Jakob Friedrich Fries. De Wette has applied it to the history of religion.¹ It is the right thing about the wrong dogma of the so-called "primitive monotheism".

(translated from the original German by Dr. Margarete Spiegel).



1. Compare R. Otto, *Philosophy of Religion*, based on Kant and Fries, London 1931.

KALIDASA !

At youth's coronation, Kalidasa,
 you took your seat, your beloved by your side,
 in Love's primal paradise.
Earth spread its emerald-green carpet beneath your feet,
 the sky held over your heads
 its canopy gold-embroidered;
the seasons danced round you
 carrying their wine cups of varied allurements,—
the whole universe yielded itself to your loneliness of delight,
 leaving no trace of human sorrows and sufferings
 in the immense solitude of your bridal chamber.

Suddenly God's curse descended from on high,
 hurling its thunder-bolt of separation
 upon the boundless detachment of youth's egotism.
The seasons' ministry in a moment was ended
 when the veil was wrenched from love's isolation,
 and on the tear-misted sky appeared the pageantry
 of the rainy world of June,
across which journeyed the sad notes of your bereaved heart
 towards a distant dream. *

Rabindranath Tagore



By Ramee Chanda

THE SIMILES OF DHARAMADASA (*continued*)

Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya

17, 18.

(i) महिषोपधातवः ॥

(ii) शूनिकदारकवच्च ॥ p. 465.

(i) Like the killing of a buffalo.

(ii) And like the son of a butcher.

It is true that a king earns a great wealth for a long time, and it may be distributed among a great number of people. But this wealth cannot be earned without causing suffering to the great multitude of men, and by causing this suffering a great sin is committed. Wealth may be shared by many men but not the sin. The misery arising from the suffering of the people is to be felt by one only. *Like the killing of a buffalo, and like the son of a butcher.* One kills a buffalo for one's self and for others. It is a feast to many, but the sin thereof belongs only to the killer. So a king commits a sin for a kingdom which is enjoyed by many. And again, there is a son of a butcher. He does not kill, as he is afraid of an unrighteous action. His kinsmen persuade him saying; "Kill. The sin thereof will belong to us equally." He replied by way of stratagem, "Well, I have a strong head-ache, share it!" They said, "It is impossible." He said : "Then how will the pain in hell be equally shared among us ?"

19.

वसुलावती ॥ p. 466.

Like the Brahmin Vasula's wife.

The wife of the Brahmin, Vasula, said to him: "In point of womanly beauty there is none on earth equal to me; yet you do not honour me by presenting me with fit clothes and ornaments !" By a stratagem he made her enter the harem of King Rudra. And her pride of beauty vanished, when she saw there the maid servants and then the queen who was no other than Beauty (or the Goddess Lakshmi) herself. Similarly a king should give up his vanity and pride when he sees his equals and superiors.

20.

पाराशरकुलभिक्षवत् ॥ p. 466.

Like a Bhikṣu (a religious mendicant) in the house of a Parasara (one belonging to the family of Parasara).

A *Bhikṣu* went to the house of a *Parāśara*. He entered there the house of one learned in mechanical science. He was requested by him to pass the rainy season in his house and was told that he would be supplied with food. He accepted it. Underground the lofty palatial mansion, there were many metallic leaves (plates) for machinery work. He made the *Bhikṣu* stay there in the lofty building, requesting him: "Please rest here in any way you like." Now, when he (the *Bhikṣu*) came out the *Ācārya* gave him money for his robe as well as wages for a servant. The *Bhikṣu* said: "I have done nothing for you, why should I take wages ?" Replied the munificent man: "You were not here in the house without work even for a moment. You remained here observing the particular posture of a mendicant."⁵ Saying this he showed him the leaves and the profit therefrom.

As there was no posture of the mendicant which was not beneficial to the man working the machine, even so there is no effect of body, mind and speech of the Buddha which is small or useless.

5 There are four particular positions (*īryāpathas*) : going, standing upright, sitting, and lying down.

21.

बन्धनमोक्षबन्धनाधिकृतज्वरवत् ॥ p. 467.

Like the fever of a superintendent of prison at the (time of) release from prison.

A superintendent of prison was employed by a royal family and all imprisonments were under his control. Now, a son was born to the king and the release of all the prisoners was ordered. Every one was pleased with the order except only one, the superintendent, who was frightened and caught fever.

In the same way when the Buddha is born, the whole world is happy with the one exception of *Māra*, the evil one.

22.

दीर्घाध्वगवत् ॥ ⁶ p. 468

Like a traveller bound for a long journey.

The more a traveller bound for a long journey travels, the more he suffers, owing to the fatigue of crossing the country and owing to the food being consumed in the course of the journey. In the same way the foolish beings by the way of the world (*samīśāra*) suffer from troubles arising from lack of place of shelter and from the vanishing of their good actions.

[Or, it can be explained in another way.] A traveller suffering from the difficulties of walking begins to halt. By halting the trouble of walking disappears, the trouble of halting also disappears by sitting, and the pain of sitting disappears by adopting a different posture. Now, if one who feels the trouble of sitting does not change his posture,⁷ it is quite possible that all trouble arising from changes in the posture will cease altogether. The case is the same with regard to the annihilation of all actions (*karmas*). Thus a wise man makes up his mind to annihilate all actions thinking that it will produce the cessation of all pains.

⁶ See No. 4.

⁷ *Iryūpatha*, see Note 5.

23.

घटवत् ॥ p. 468.

Like an earthen jar.⁸

⁸ Details are wanting in the fragments

24.

कुम्भकारपाकवत् ॥ p. 469.

Like a baking by a potter.

Just as in the burning (of different pots) by a potter success is uncertain, while there is ultimate invariable destruction of all the burnt pots of the potter, even so the success of all worldly actions is uncertain and finally there is an annihilation of all worldly things.

25

पर्वतशिलारोपणवत् ॥ p. 469.

Like the lifting of a stone on to a mountain.

Just as a stone requires effort for being lifted up to the top of a mountain, but falls to the ground without any effort, even so all activities of this world which demand much effort and resource come to their end without any effort.

26.

नदीतीरगृहकरणवत् ॥ p. 649.

Like the building of a house on a river bank.

A person built a house on the bank of a river, but the place suddenly cracked. Then he built a house at another place on the same river bank, but that place, too, parted asunder. He continued doing so and there was an endless series of actions. Thus there was undergone great labour by the house-builder but without its reward ; even so are all the actions of this world.

27.

बालबन्धनमोक्षवत् ॥ 470.

Like the imprisonment and release of (the king) Bala.

There was a king, Bala, by name. He was cruel and harsh-looking and his punishments were terrible. Whosoever was imprisoned in his prison was strongly bound by five parts of the body, namely, two hands, two feet, and the neck. When he would not release any one he would order the guards: "This man is to be released, but so long as he lives he will have to remain fixed in only one position he chooses." And the guards carried out the orders undertaking to obey with the words: "Yes, Your Majesty." Now, to one who is released from King Bala's prison, the release itself is as horrible as imprisonment owing to the penalty attached to it.

In the same way even heaven is as horrible to the wise as hell.

28, 29.

(i) यक्षाभ्याहतवत् ॥

(ii) बालनायकवत् ॥ p. 470.

(i) Like one struck by a *Yaksa*.

(ii) And like a boy leader.

There was a man. He was seized by a *Yakṣa* whom he had not seen. He thought to himself: "Such is the pain when he is not seen, but were he to be seen my body would be crushed like a handful of husk.

[The description of the second simile is lost in the fragments.]

(to be continued)



THE CHANGING AGE

Rabindranath Tagore

In the old days our gatherings took place in the temple pavilion; the people we met there were none but our neighbours; the matters discussed were confined to our village. Apart from a long mid-day siesta, our leisure time was spent in quarrels, or desultory talk, or cards or chess. Beyond these, occasional food for our minds was provided by wandering play actors, *kirtan* singers, recitations from the Ramayana, contests in improvising verses or songs,—the subject in every case drawn from our accumulated store of prehistoric legends, the stories, their characters, the emotions animating them, having all been repeated from year to year, generation to generation, till they had heaped up around us the same rigid materials for a uniform shaping of our individual lives. The narrow world in which we lived was thus all too familiar to each one of us. We knew nothing of the larger life, beyond and around of the vast universe of humanity; nothing of the distant, evolving, nebulous worlds outside the orbit of our own, which had not, like it, become hardened by force of old-time habits and social regulations; nothing of the mutual actions and reactions between these other worlds that are yet giving birth to ever-new problems, yet expanding their frontiers and making history.

Into this India of ours, the first impact from the outside was that of the Mussalmans. They, also, were of the unchanging East, with lives not lived in the present time, but hide-bound within the narrow limits of their history. They consolidated their empire in India by dint of their physical prowess, but their mind had no creative exuberance. When they settled within our borders, they came into friction with us, but a friction that was external—a conflict of one set of inflexible habits and customs, one set of fixed beliefs, with a different set. Their influence affected the system of administration, but did not penetrate the region of the mind. Persian became the Court language; Persian manners were adopted by the elite of the towns; any number of Persian words found their way into Bengali; and yet Persian influence was hardly shown by the Bengali literature of those days, comprised mainly of Vaishnava lyrics and Mangal ballads, of which the former have no trace of it at all, while in the latter there are only occasional references to the Mahomedan rulers.

The Mussalmans thus entered the country, but did not let in any light from outside. They occupied it as their home, keeping all doors closed to external influences. The clash of their arms left its mark on the land, but did not rouse its people into any great creative activity in any new field. In fine, these two civilisations, Hindu and Islamic, here stood side by side, with averted faces, each hemmed in by its own age-old traditions. Not that they had no influence whatsoever on each other,—the influence of Persian art on Hindu technique and of Islamic thought on Hindu sectarianism was both considerable and happy, but the two cultures so much contradicted each other that no new and vital ways of thinking on a national scale were released.

Even to-day we think of the Mussalmans mainly in terms of number. They have brought into our politics problems of addition and subtraction; their presence does not multiply our forces, but divides them; so that for India such increase of population has so far proved the reverse of fortunate.

Then came the Britishers, not only as men, but as representative of the new ideals of Europe. Men occupy space, ideals occupy mind; and in consequence their advent was of varied import. As men they were even farther away from us than the Mussalmans. But, as representing the spirit of Europe, they came ever so near, affecting us both widely and deeply, as no outsiders had done before. The moving force of European civilisation entered and stirred our inert minds, as the rain from the distant sky penetrates the earth and makes it shoot forth into exuberant life: the soil that cannot so respond is a desert, its inability only showing its moribund condition. When a certain type of Indian critic wishes to run down a modern writer he displays much imagination as well as some erudition in skilfully picking out from his work every bit of foreign influence. The same kind of influence was to be seen when the surge of the Renaissance, welling up in Italy, overflowed the whole of Europe; but the many and varied effects which it had on the creators of English literature has never been deemed either strange or derogatory—rather they would have shown themselves barbarians had they been unable to receive and use the wealth of new ideas that flowed in on them. Giving and taking needs must go on where minds are alive and awake.

Let us try to understand the character of this intellectual light from the West that, by force of some tremendous impulse, irradiated the whole sky of modern history. Wherever Europe set foot it conquered. By what power was this intellectual conquest achieved?

By the sincerety of its pursuit of truth, never content to be deluded by intellectual laziness, lure of imagination, superficial resemblances, or the blind following of old wisdom; ruthlessly overcoming the temptation to take for granted even what man's nature impels him to believe. It has conquered the world of knowledge at every step because of the purity of its strenuous exercise of reason, free from all taint of personal predilection.

Though the pages of our calendar of daily observances and prohibitions raise a screen of doubt against the free access of light, yet through its gaps the science of Europe has found entry into our court-yard, bringing before us knowledge in its universal aspect; infecting us with the eager curiosity to invade, by observation and experiment, all that is near and far, infinitely big and infinitesimally small, whether of practical or only of theoretical value; showing us that the realm of knowledge is one and indivisible and that no dictum of any wise man, however great his reputation, can be allowed to over-ride the testimony of even the slightest of natural happenings.

As is the case with the physical, so also is it with the moral, world. Among the doctrines of the new age that have come to us is this, that the crime does not vary with the person. Whether the Brahmin kills a Sudra, or the Sudra kills a Brahmin, it is murder all the same, and same the penalty, in spite of any fiat to the contrary of some sage of old. Not that we are even yet always sure in our hearts that the weight of right and wrong is not to be measured by our own social standards; nevertheless a considerable revolution has been brought about in our thought and behaviour. The very proposition that those whom social usage had decreed to be untouchable should be allowed entry into temples, is proof of this. No doubt, there is still a section of the orthodox who persist in quoting scripture against conscience; but their advocacy no longer carries general conviction. The inner voice of our people has begun to tell them that what is manifestly wrong cannot be made right by force of custom, scripture, or superior strength, and must not be respected even at the behest of one who calls himself Sankaracharya.

To return to Bengali literature at the time of the Mahomedan conquest, we there find the idea that unlimited right to do wrong is the mark of supreme power—an idea that has besmirched the character of the very divinities as then conceived. As ruthlessness was the means by which successive rulers consolidated their power, so was fear of oppression the factor that determined the precedence of the

gods and goddesses. The old phrase of flattery: "The lord of Delhi is as the Lord of the World", really meant that arbitrary exercise of power, unrestricted by considerations of justice, was thought to be characteristic of both. The Brahmin was then called *bhudeva*, the divinity of earth, meaning in effect that he did not need to acquire greatness to be popularly accounted divine, but was allowed by his birth to arrogate to himself, as we gather from our old codes of law, an inviolable right to perpetrate wrongs with impunity. There is no question that the British Empire is both wider and stronger than the Moghul Empire, and yet the veriest idiot now-a-days would not think of saying that the Viceroy of India is as the Lord of the World, because to-day we have not for our idea of divine lordship the power to shower bullets on defenceless people. Even as we suffer from it, we are now able to judge British rule by an ideal moral standard; we do not think it impertinence to adjure superior power to restrain itself on still higher grounds of righteousness. In other words, by admitting an independent standard of right and wrong, the all-powerful British Empire has placed itself on the same moral plane as the weakest of its subjects.

When we first became acquainted with English literature, we gained from it not only a new wealth of emotion, but also the desire to free man from the oppression of man. In our ears sounded the proclamation breaking the chains of human slavery. To our vision was presented a valiant struggle to prevent human labour from being treated as a mere economic commodity. Not that the Indian mind was unfamiliar with moral and spiritual values transcending the arbitrary distinctions of a social code, but it has to be admitted that their functioning in our social life was so effectively thwarted by the inertia of ancient usage and prejudice that it needed the full impact of an electric foreign influence to re-vitalise our moral sense—and perhaps a national humiliation to chasten it. Before this we had reconciled ourselves to the belief that, due to predestination or accident of birth, people of a certain race or caste were bound to accept without question or resentment the insult of social or religious disabilities,—a state of degradation that could only be cured by divine intervention, or more fortunate rebirth next time. Even to-day there are educated men who, while they believe in self-help for getting rid of political inequality, still advise the socially depressed classes to submit to the indignity of their position on religious grounds. They forget that this very habit of accepting as inevitable the conditions

into which one is born, is the chief factor that helps to keep the shackles of political serfdom intact. Our contact with Europe has re-familiarised us, on the one hand, with the universality of the physical laws of cause and effect, and, on the other, with the conception of an absolute moral standard over which no scripture, no custom, however old, no special dispensation for favoured classes, can claim superior authority. It is on this ground we take our stand in striving to improve our political status, and if today we challenge our rulers with claims such as would never have occurred to us to present to a Moghul Emperor, it is by force of the ideal voiced in the words of the poet:—"A man's a man for a' that."

I have now passed my seventieth year. I made my entry into this new age which may fittingly be called the European age, about the middle of the nineteenth century, at a period which the young people of the present day sarcastically refer to as Victorian. England, which represented Europe to us, was then at the height its power and prosperity. None of us could then have thought that ill fortune would ever invade its overflowing store-room. Whatever might have been the lessons to be drawn from past history, no sign was to be seen, no apprehension troubled us, that any adverse wind could thwart those who were at the helm of Western Civilisation, and bring about a reversal of its progress. Freedom of speech, liberty of the individual, the ideals for which the Reformation and the French Revolution had fought, were still firmly believed in. The age was glorified with the messages of Mazzini and Garibaldi; brother fought against brother in America for the abolition of slavery; Gladstone thundered forth his condemnation of Turkish atrocities. That was the time when we too had begun definitely to nurse a hope of India's freedom. In that hope, it is true, there was antagonism to the British conqueror, but there was also an assumed reliance on British character. How else did we at all arrive at the conviction that on the claims of our manhood could be based a demand for equal partnership in British rule? What a stupendous leap did that mark from the previous age into the new age! What a vastly liberal education it was that led us all of a sudden to think so bigly of the value of man, of the respect due to man as man! What if it has not even yet made us concede equal treatment and respect to all who are of our own family, our own neighbourhood, our own community, our own country? In spite of such contradiction by our behaviour, the fact remains that little by little this spirit of Europe has worked a large change in our hearts.

The same is the case with the scientific attitude of mind. Science has come to our door through our schools and colleges, but in our homes scripture and calendar have not relinquished their sway. Yet, for all such inconsistencies, the western cult of reason has won a real dominion over our minds.

So, on consideration, it becomes clear that this age is, for us, specially an age of inward co-operation with Europe. Such co-operation is easy enough so long as our respect for Europe receives no shock. For, as I have said, it is of this respect that the new age was born, of the respect paid by Europe in the region of the intellect to pure reason cleared of illusion, in the region of behaviour to pure justice uninfluenced by personal considerations. In spite of its frequent lapses in practice, it was Europe's respect for the ideal that kept open the door to our respect for Europe. And, by reason of the self-respect thereby engendered in us, we were and still are given the boldness to make what might once have seemed extravagant claims on behalf of our countrymen. We must admit that there was no such common ground on which to take our stand in the time of our former rulers, so that while it was possible to gain chance favours when they felt generous, no claim could be made by virtue of any universal standard, nor as man demanding help from man.

Since then history has sped on its course. Asia shows signs of awakening from her long sleep. Japan has gained an equal status with the European powers as the result of her contact and conflict with the West, showing that she is living in the present, not dreaming of the past. And all the Eastern races, likewise, have stepped into the new age. We had been hoping all this time that we would be able to come into harmony with the world's progress, that our chariot of self-determination would be set going, and that it would be British rule whose pull would assist such onward movement. But after a long, long wait we have come to discover that the wheels of the chariot were not meant to move. The Britisher has apparently advanced into a newer age in which his ideal of government has begun to find its glory in law and order and in constitutional rules and regulations ; education, sanitation, and production of wealth by the people have all fallen into the back-ground, with no prospect of coming into the forefront in the near future, so insatiable are the requirements of law and order. It is England, again representing present day Europe, which has set about to deprive us of her own best gift, leaving India as a dark spot in the never-setting sun of the British Empire.

England, France and Germany are to-day indebted to America. Their debt is doubtless heavy. But had it been even double of what it is, it would have been quite possible to pay it off, if the debtor countries had been content with the mere maintainance of law and order, and had got rid of all compunction in cutting down their standard of life in every other way ; this is to say, if they had reduced their rations to a half-belly-full, their drinking water to much below their thirst, their education to about 5 percent of their population, and their expenditure on sanitation to the point of risking epidemics. But since such a course would have been wholly incompatible with the character of their civilisation, we have witnessed the spectacle of their repudiation of these debts. Should it not be open to the people of India, on the same ground of their paramount right to the bare decencies of life, to protest against the continuance of the heavy burden of debt incurred by the intolerably expensive regime which keeps her condemned to barbarous conditions ? Is Europe now proposing with her own hands to restrict her ideal of civilisation to the western hemisphere ? Does it own no responsibility to the rest of mankind, to future ages ?

Nay more, we have seen that for those whom she regards as aliens the torch of Europe's civilisation is no longer for giving light, but for setting fire. That is why opium packets, supported by cannon balls, were rained on China—an atrocity the like of which history has never known, except perhaps in the extirpation of the wonderful civilisation of the Maya people for the sake of their gold. In the middle ages the conquering Tartars raised monuments of heaped-up skulls, but the wound so inflicted on the conquered was not long lasting. This forcing of opium by Europe down the throat of China poisoned her to the marrow for generations. When the youth movement in Persia sought to rescue the country from its age-long inertia, the tragedy of the throttling of their endeavour by Europe is told in Schuster's "Strangling of Persia." And every one knows of the horrors of the Congo, and other similar cruelties perpetrated on the Africans. Even to this day negroes are subjected to untold indignities in the United States, where white men and women flock to enjoy the spectacle of the burning alive of victims belonging to that unfortunate race.

Then came the Great War, raising one more veil from western history. It was like witnessing the paroxysms of a drunken maniac. Such superabundance of deceit, such bestial ferocity, may have disturbed for a short time some period in the dark ages, but never in such

monstrous proportions. Invasions of barbarity in the old days came hidden in their own cloud of dust, but its modern irruption is like that of a volcano—long pent-up viciousness suddenly let loose in a conflagration, reddening the sky around, burning up the green fertility of the earth. After the war Europe seems to have lost the purity, the sanity of its civilisation. It now openly scoffs at the ideal of the universal well-being of man. The Europe which we first came to know through England, had a decency of reticence about things that were shameful. Now it is ashamed of such decency. Western civilisation no longer admits any call to be gentlemanly. Ghastly cruelty stalks along in public with chest thrown out. We have seen the doings of Japan, the first oriental pupil in the European school, in Korea and in China. If taxed with her insatiate ignoring of the rights of others, she smilingly points to European precedents. We could not even have imagined a few years ago the mad blood-lust shown by the Black and Tan hooligans let loose on Ireland. The very Europe which reviled Turkey as a devil incarnate is now openly flaunting Fascism in her own territories. The freedom of self-expression which we once had learnt to look upon as Europe's chief glory is being more and more suppressed all over the west. Respect for the religious beliefs, the moral scruples of others used to be inculcated from the pulpits of Europe. And now? Italy, the home of European Renaissance, is now more enamoured of her armaments than of her arts; she prefers to bully where she once sang. And Germany that once represented the best in European civilisation—how easy it has proved for her to shatter to pieces every ideal of that same civilisation!

As all this aftermath of that devastating war continues to spread all over the world with such demoniac abandon, the question repeatedly arises in my mind: "Where is that supreme tribunal of man before which the victims of outrage may make their final appeal? Are we then to lose our faith in humanity,—must barbarism for ever contend with barbarism? And, amidst the hopelessness of finding an answer, comes the thought: However terrible the modern degradation of the west may be, still we must, with heads held high, pass judgement on it. We must proclaim that it is self-doomed. It must perish—or we too shall stand self-condemned. That men are still to be found who risk torture and death to dare proclaim this, is for us the greatest thing of all. The batons of hirelings may break every bone in their bodies, and yet they do not say with folded hands as of old: "The lord of Delhi is as the Lord of the World."

Let us never admit that they who are in power can do no wrong. Let us continue openly to aver that it is the most powerful whose responsibility is the greatest, and whose crimes are, according to their own standard, the most heinous. If ever the day comes when the sufferers, the down trodden, lose the power to drown the shouts of raging tyranny with the cry of "Shame!", then indeed shall we know that the new age has spent its all and become hopelessly bankrupt. After that the deluge!



LEFT WING AND RIGHT WING

Acharya Kripalani

SOME of our learned friends try to prove elaborately what nobody, who has any experience or study, ever denies. In a sense they try to convert the faithful. All are agreed that there are poverty, unemployment and low purchasing power in the land. One also cannot deny such an obvious proposition as that production could be greatly increased by the mechanisation of agriculture and industry. We may, for the sake of argument, be prepared to admit that the last can best be done under a socialist regime. What, however, we would like to know is how the desired changes are to be brought about, how we are to get the necessary power and the means to achieve the end in view. It is admitted that we have not the necessary power and the means. The question therefore is, how are we to get these. Industrialization, socialization, divestment of vested interests, increasing production with purchasing power and the elimination of unemployment are not theoretical and academic questions. They are questions in practical politics and they cannot be solved unless we have the power and the machinery of the state in our hands. Lenin could not electrify Russia without first securing political power nor could his successors carry out industrialization and mechanisation of agriculture without absolute and unquestioned authority.

Why for instance is there no natural evolution of our industries? Wherever we turn we find hindrances in our way. These are not theoretical but practical. They must be removed before we can achieve anything. The obstacles in the way may roughly be classed as political, economic, and social. We know, in the last resort, our economic disabilities come to be buttressed by our political system. We cannot, to any appreciable extent, progress economically unless these political disabilities are removed. Recently we have also seen that we cannot remove any great outstanding social evils without political power. Even when the nation is prepared to abolish untouchability the law stands in its way with one pretext or the other. If we want to go "dry" the law renders us no help. If we want to make our nation literate, the state, by its refusal to grant money for nation-building purposes, acts as a block in our path. No great reform can be carried out unless the state authority either itself undertakes it or is at least ranged on

the side of the reformer. We must either generate or capture political power.

Japan had political power and, in thirty years or so, not only it industrialized itself but was able to throw an effective challenge to the western world. India began industrialization a little earlier, but what has been the net result ? Census reports show that a greater percentage of the population lives upon agriculture today than ever before. Russia has been able to industrialize in fifteen years. And how futile seemed the dreams of the Russian idealists before political power became theirs !

Let us, however, examine in some detail the net results of the Indian effort at industrialization. All industries are in a precarious condition. In the present day division of the world into nations that are politically and economically at war with one another, it is impossible for any country to keep its industries going unless it has complete control over finances, currency, tariff and foreign policy. In the absence of this, industries are bound to be in a precarious condition. On account of the world depression even such Governments, as have all the control over finances, currency, tariff and foreign policy, find it difficult to protect their industries ; how much more so in India when the best of our patriots are without political power ! There is no normal healthy growth of Indian industries. This is so in spite of the fact that all indigenous enterprise has received heavy protection,—sometimes to the extent of 200 per cent or more—from the Swadeshi movement since the Partition agitation. The consumer has willingly and voluntarily borne the extra burdens in a country where the purchasing power is notoriously low. Public men have acted as the unpaid agents and advertizers of indigenous industry. Vast sums have been spent by the Congress and other public bodies to organise exhibitions and bazars. In the Councils and Assemblies the cause of big industry has been ever advocated and some protection got from an unwilling Government. What has been the reward to the public or the poor of all the sacrifice and all the effort ? The industries have not tried even to put their house in order. Their efficiency remains the lowest in the world. They perhaps lack incentive. But how could it be otherwise ? They know they may come to grief any day with one stroke of the finance member's pen. They therefore seek to make hay while the sun shines—the biggest profits by hook or by crook in the shortest time. The Government allows them to do this because it gives an equal and more than equal opportunity to the

foreign capital invested here. There is no great harm if some crumbs fall to the coloured capitalists. Only these crumbs should not be substantial enough to endanger industry in England or their foreign commercial and political relations.

This indifference of the capitalists, as of the Government, for the country and for the masses has such an evil effect that the elementary rights of labour are not protected. Indian labour, so far as the hours of work, conditions under which the same is performed, housing arrangements, compensation for injury, pay, pension, education, medical aid and entertainment are concerned, is much behind labour elsewhere. The nation has not been able to protect it from the worst kind of exploitation—an exploitation that was known to other countries only half a century ago.

Take again the case of agriculture. The land is divided in homeopathic holdings. In several provinces the average holdings are of less than two acres. This only means that there are thousands of holdings of less than half or quarter of an acre. The sub-division is ever on the increase. There is no law in the land that can arrest it. Only a Government that could provide for the disinherited of an agriculturist family could change the law. Such provision could only be made in the fields of commerce and industry. Government knows this fully well and therefore no effort has been made to arrest the sub-division of land.

The holdings, small as they are, are not in consolidated blocks but scattered and intermixed. What could a poor tractor do with such holdings? So the question is not one of theory, whether small holdings are more profitable or large scale production, whether peasant proprietorship will be more helpful or land nationalization. The question is of power in the nation to effect the one or the other revolution in agriculture; for I hold that under the present conditions both will be revolutionary changes, requiring in the hands of the reformers absolute political and economic power over the whole of India. None of these things can be done without some sort of planned economy. But to talk of planned economy without power is possible only in irresponsible conferences of theoretical economists afraid to say the right thing even when they know it, and yet having the desire and the vanity to look learned and up-to-date.

The first problem therefore in India is not a revolutionary programme of reconstruction as is implied by industrialization and socialism, but a radical programme for the capture of power. Till

such power is achieved all other social and economic programmes can only be of a reformatory character.

Apart from his fads, it is some such considerations that make Gandhiji keep before the nation things that it can do *without* the aid of state power and state machinery. His whole khadi and village programme has this political and economic background. Recently one Lord Farringdon, a Socialist Peer, visited Gandhiji. This gentleman wanted to know from him the real object of the Village Industries' Association. Gandhiji who was observing silence wrote : "To show the people how to turn waste into wealth." The questioner asked : "How do you want to tackle the problem of rural indebtedness?" The reply was : "That we are not dealing with. It requires state effort. I am just now discovering things, people can do without state effort. Not that I do not want state aid. But I know I cannot get it on my terms." This in a few expressive words reveals the whole economic basis of Gandhiji's programme. He was talking to a socialist who perhaps would not have understood his usual spiritual language or his ideas of simplicity and voluntary poverty. So he talked in plain political and economic language that a foreigner could understand. No economist worth the name can have any quarrel with Gandhiji for utilizing the waste of the nation and turning it into wealth. In the same interview he also said that there was no other constructive programme before the nation.

Under the present political arrangement, I believe there can be no revolutionary constructive programme. It will all have to be reformatory, "utilizing the waste" of the nation. It can only do very moderate things and that modestly. It is this fact that has made the socialists adumbrate no constructive programme. They tell us of their aims and what they stand for—nationalization of all instruments of production; which only means that all economic activity, whether of production, distribution, exchange, or consumption, will have to be regulated by the state, and a state necessarily managed by the producers, that is, the proletariat, in its own interest. Before this is done the proletariat or some body or some party on their behalf must first capture power. These are the aims and objects of scientific socialism. The real Socialists therefore do not countenance the work of the Trade Unionists. They hold that it is reformatory in character, concerned with the minor disabilities of the workers. Sometimes they tolerate it, because they consider such work as prelude to strikes which give the necessary training to the masses for the final class war.

Mostly they denounce such trade union activities which they think, by making labour a little more comfortable—such reformatory effort when successful dulls the edge of discontent—postpones the day of reckoning, the day of the revolution. They, as scientific socialists, know that when there is depression in the industry no strike can succeed. The owners sometimes welcome it. They even engineer it. But yet the scientific socialists, under such circumstances when the industries are in depression, will not mind engineering a strike, knowing full well that it would end in failure entailing untold misery and suffering. They think that this misery and suffering are inevitable. The price has got to be paid. Individuals can only be the means to collective advancement. They have no value or worth in themselves. The masses have ever been the fodder for the cannon of the capitalists and the imperialists. They will at least be better paid in their future generations if they become the fodder in the cause of the revolution.

On the other hand, a genuine trade unionist calculates the chances of success. He does not want the poor to be mere instruments. He feels individuals have also a life beyond the group. Their sufferings and sorrows as individuals are real. Their life, however humble, is an end in itself. He lies low if he sees no chance of success. For him a strike is a means for a reformatory change in the conditions of labour. He does not indulge in it as so much gymnastics preparing for the final struggle, the final war to the knife between the classes, which will establish a classless society.

So the scientific socialist cannot possibly do any constructive work among the city proletariat unless he modifies, or for the time being suspends for practical considerations, the rigour of his theory. If he cannot engage in any constructive work in the city, much less can he do so in the village. He would be lost in the village problems. They are so tiny, so local that with his world vision he will find it difficult, if not useless, to work for their solution. He will find, only in aeons, if ever, will such reformatory effort produce conditions suitable for a revolution. He would throw up the sponge in sheer disgust. Here therefore his work can only be to organise demonstrations. These demonstrations must necessarily be periodical. As soon as the agricultural season begins he will find that no revolutionary ardour of his, no picture of the millennium of a classless society to come, will induce the villager to leave his plough and his sickle. Such seasonal demonstrations will also be, if they are to be on a big scale,—and demonstrations would lose all their virtue and effect if they were not on a big scale—few and far

between. The village proletariat, when it assembles for a meeting or a demonstration, say, 50,000 strong, or even 10,000 strong, must disperse before 3 p. m. They all come on foot. They must disperse in time to reach their homes before nightfall. There can be no catering for a crowd of 10,000, much less of 50,000, in any village, even for a day. These crowds can therefore be spasmodic, having very little cohesion and serving no useful purpose for any constructive effort. They can have only some limited propagandist and demonstrative value.

So, the sole function of the scientific socialist, whether in the city or in the village, can only be propaganda, demonstration, and preaching of the socialist ideology. The last—preaching—must be done by select and chosen intellectuals. If put in the hands of all and sundry, if put in the hands of the city, and the village, volunteer, it would only teach one superstition in place of another and one fanaticism for another. All talk of scientific socialism would thus go by the board. What then are the rank and file of the socialists to do?

This problem of the rank and file of his army is solved by Gandhiji. He effectively provides for the periodical employment of the politically unemployed. His constructive programmes give scope not only to the leaders but to the humblest of his followers. All are provided with day to day work. They are provided with some daily wages, in keeping with the voluntary contributions received from a poor people. They live a neat, simple and clean life. They need never be out of work.

For the capture of power Gandhiji has a radical programme as radical as any red revolutionary, only it is non-violent. It is not my purpose here to go into the philosophy, or even into the practical value, situated as we are to-day, of non-violence. The latter has been recognised by a section of the socialists. The question is not whether this or that theory is right or wrong; that only the historian of the future or a prophet of the present can settle, and I claim to be neither. The question is whether the new method of non-cooperation is direct action and, as such, revolutionary, as distinguished from constitutional. I believe it is direct action and it is revolutionary. Non-cooperation is, as some have called it, an open conspiracy. I would say that it is a non-violent open conspiracy. So, in ultimate analysis, Gandhiji has a programme, which is revolutionary for the capture of political power, and reformatory for constructive work.

It is this double aspect of Gandhiji's movement that makes

the political phrase as used in the west of the Right and Left Wing lose most of its significance, when applied to Congress politics. Politicians who may be considered as belonging to the Right when their activities are viewed from the conservative tendencies of the constructive programme, come to belong to the Left when the movement of direct action is on; those who belong by their ideology to the Left wing sometimes fail to show their Left wing tendencies when the battle is on. This was clear at the conference at Poona in 1933 when Gandhiji's followers were for the continuance of the 1932 Movement while many socialists advocated the suspension of the movement. It is also because of this that socialists have not been able to dislodge Gandhiji's followers from their position of power in the Congress and of affection in the hearts of the people. There are among them tried and seasoned soldiers who have given good account of themselves in constructive work, in flood, in famine, in earthquake or any calamity that has befallen their people and, also, when the occasion has arisen, given determined battles to the Government. When the battle is on, Gandhiji, their leader, appears to be the greatest and the most uncompromising revolutionary. He is the one in whom the idea of personal safety is least present. I could mention other names, but I may not. The intelligent reader can think for himself.

It is also common knowledge that Gandhiji and his followers do not want to lose touch with other groups, even though politically such groups come nowhere near direct action. Moderates, capitalists, reformers of any party or community, are all asked to join the movement against Untouchability, of Hindu-parchar, Khadi, Village Industries and Village Reconstruction. There is yet another point from which the co-operation of other political and semi-political groups and classes is sought for by the Congress and by Gandhiji. Antagonistic groups and classes in India have one thing in common. They all suffer from the dwarfing effects of a foreign Government. It is not only the masses—if it were so the politicians would come from the masses exclusively. True the masses physically suffer more. But the greatest suffering falls to the lot of the most sensitive, and these are found in all classes and in all communities. Their pride in their country, in their culture, nay in their respective religion, is wounded. A national movement should harness all these forces and focus them to one centre and one objective, that is the achieving of national political liberty. The national sentiment, imbedded as it is in the present psychology of the peoples, is not yet

such a worn-out factor as would render it impossible for the different groups to join on it. Even Russian communists are not altogether without it, though some of our budding socialists seem to be ashamed to own it.

National and democratic movements the world over show how all the different elements combined together in other countries for a common objective. In Holland, England, America, Italy, France, and even in Russia, the whole nation rose as one man to throw off the native or the foreign yoke. True the share of the masses, their sufferings and sacrifices were the greatest, though power in those revolutions fell not always in their hands. In the earlier revolutions the power fell in the hands of a rich powerful middle class, considered in those days to be the natural leaders of the masses. In France there was an attempt to attach the newly wrested power from the king and the lords to the masses, but it failed, owing to the better ability, leadership and organization of the middle class. Even in Russia, after the overthrow of the Czar, power fell into the hands of the middle group which, however, was not sufficiently organised and vital to retain it for long. It also lacked the necessary leadership. The Bolsheviks, with a better knit organisation, with greater push and drive, with a fuller knowledge of what they wanted, and with the ablest possible leadership, were immediately able to carry through a second revolution which put them in power as guardians of the proletariat. In the first Revolution that overthrew the Czar and the Russian bureaucracy, the Bolsheviks did not stand apart; they too joined hands with all those who desired and worked for the overthrow of the old order. What happens at critical times in England? Whenever the nation is in the grip of a crisis the political genius of the British evolves a National Government. The differences between the diverse groups are for the time forgotten. So in all revolutions the progressive and effective elements of the nation join hands. The victory goes to that group which is the most prepared and the most organized and which, above all, has evolved the right kind of leadership ; for in critical times much depends upon leadership.

Take the alternative where each group suspects the other and wants to keep itself pure and uncontaminated. Take the socialist group. It says the zamindar and the capitalist will never join the struggle for freedom. They will, in the last resort, back out because they would feel that their peculiar rights could only be supported by a foreign Government. If this is so, it holds true for the upper

middle class also. It holds true of the lawyer, professor, doctor and others of the learned professions. The lower middle class is always doubtful material, as has been proved in Italy and Germany. The peasant proprietors, if they knew the full implications of the socialist programme, the nationalization of land along with the other instruments of production, would be the greatest stumbling block. The communalists, be they Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs, will of course hold out. By this process of elimination—if whole classes are supposed to be homogeneous, organized and disciplined groups, and are guided by one and only consideration, the advancement of their own class or sectional interests and that in a narrow sense—the whole vast population of India will be eliminated. What will remain will be a few chosen people, the iron-sides. These must conquer for they represent the only true idea, the idea that is going to conquer the world in the near future. Such faith and fervour bordering on religious frenzy and fanaticism can be understood in the followers of a Christ or a Mahomed, or even of a Gandhi. But in scientific socialism wedded to objective facts, such frenzy would imply that the new faith of socialism is only another religion without a god. It will have its new frenzy, its fervour, and, above all, its fanaticism. All this I know will be repudiated in the name of history, science and realism. But, in fact, it is no whit better than any of the elder faiths, with like potencies of narrowness, formalism, bigotry, and the arrogance of the chosen people, destined not to inherit heaven but this earth, and destined also to throw into the pit all the unfaithful, to be there for all time to come. Such a faith will oppress, suppress and repress, even as the old faiths did, only with less sanctity for human life and keener and more scientific weapons and a better organization. It will not have the saving grace of Gandhiji's truth and non-violence. If new fanaticisms must arise, it would be better for humanity that they be at least non-violent.

I have stated in brief the position and merits of the Gandhian scheme of political and social reconstruction as contra-distinguished from socialism. I have not discussed the theory of non-violence nor any of the far reaching implications of the Gandhian programme. That would be going beyond the limits of the present controversy.

THE TEMPLE OF KONARAK

Nirmal Kumar Bose

THE artist Nandalal Bose is a very quiet man. It is seldom that he talks about all that he really feels as an artist ; it is as though he suspected too much the inadequacy of words to hazard his profound feelings and thoughts to their charge. But one evening, when there were not many men near by, he gave us an admirable exposition of what he felt about the great temple of the Sun at Konarak. Nanda Babu told us that although people talked more about the Tajmahal, he personally believed that Konarak was artistically superior to the more well-known monument at Agra. But he felt shy of expressing such a heretic opinion in public. He had tried it before, and had only succeeded in rousing a storm of protest from his hearers. And that was good reason for him not to talk about it any more.

But our readers may be curious to know what this temple of Konarak is like, and why it is considered to be the supreme example of Indian architecture by one of the greatest living artists of today.

The temple of the Sun-god at Konarak was built about the middle of the thirteenth century by Narasimhadeva II., King of Orissa. It stands about twenty miles east of the town of Puri, and about a couple of miles from the sea shore. The place is now in ruins ; the principal temple is gone ; only the audience-hall and a few walls of the adjoining temples remain to give evidence of the glory that once was.

King Narasimhadeva II. was a great conqueror, who had brought under subjugation all the country from the banks of the Ganges in the north to the mouths of the Godaveri in the south. One of his predecessors, Anangabhimdeva, had been a great builder ; and the present temple of Jagannath at Puri is generally ascribed to him. Perhaps Narasimhadeva II. tried to emulate his illustrious predecessor ; perhaps he determined to build something which would surpass all that the Gangas had ever built before in the kingdom of Orissa. In any case, he did not stint in the matter of expenses ; for it is reported that the revenue of Orissa for a period of twelve years was lavished upon this one temple of Konarak.

The style in which the temple of the Sun was built at Konarak was not new. The artists who were entrusted with the work did not

try to create anything extraordinary, in the way of form or ornamentation. They did not aim at startling the spectator into a feeling of astonishment. They took hold of a style of architecture with which the people were already quite familiar, but they did something which turned a common object into one of the masterpieces of architectural art.

It was usual in Orissa to build two temples, side by side, during the time of which we are now speaking. One of these consisted of a tall tower, the sides of which were bent slightly inwards, while it was surmounted by a ribbed and flattened spheroid which added a dignity to the whole form. This temple, technically known as the *Rekha*, enshrined the throne on which the image of the Deity was placed. The other structure, smaller in height, was, however, wider in proportions. It was the audience hall, and had huge doors on four sides. This building, known as the *Jagamohan*, was covered by a pyramidal roof built up of a series of thin horizontal courses arranged in a number of tiers. At Konarak, the number of tiers is three ; and right on the top of these courses, come the figures of crouching lions who hold up, on their back, an immense bell-shaped capital which is crowned by a flattened spheroid and the finial, consisting of a water-pot and a full-blown lotus.

This is the general appearance of an Orissan temple ; and the same was maintained at Konarak. Only the temple, in the present case, was built about two hundred and twenty feet high, that is, about forty feet higher than the next highest temple of Jagannath at Puri. The *Rekha* temple at Konarak is gone ; only the *Jagamohan* remains. But this latter by itself, in its present condition, without the water-pot and the lotus at the top, is no less than one hundred and twenty-nine feet high.

The artist who designed the temple of Konarak knew that, so far, he was merely following the established canons of architecture in Orissa. Where he showed his originality was in connection with the meaning that he gave to the whole temple. He built an immense stylobate, fully thirteen feet high, under the temple ; and on its sides he carved twenty-four huge wheels and seven horses ; and thus transformed the building, which was more than two hundred feet high, into a magnificent chariot for the Sun-god who was enshrined within.

In Hindu mythology, the god of the Sun is described as riding upon his chariot in the sky, drawn by seven fiery horses. The

architect of Konarak fixed this image for ever in stone ; and the proportions which he established between the stylobate and the body of the temple, and the manner in which he divided the facade into different members and introduced deep lines of light and shade in the two temples, was such that the temple became, not only a fit symbol of the march of the great Giver of Light, but one of India's noblest architectural creations.

The architect of Konarak then proceeded to decorate the temple with sculpture. In a frieze right at the bottom of the stylobate, he carved the figures of elephants and horses running in an endless procession round the temple. In order to add variety, the sculptors often introduced scenes of boar-hunt or deer-hunt in the frieze. The reader will be surprised to learn that the entire frieze is nearly four hundred yards long, while each of the figures in it is about nine inches high. Altogether there are no less than sixteen hundred elephants in that single frieze, with a sprinkling of horses and riders, deer, boars, bulls and lions. No two portions of the frieze are alike, and none of the animal figures seems to be the repetition of another.

Above the base, the stylobate is cut up into deep horizontal members, the intervals between which are then divided into smaller compartments by thin vertical sections of the wall being placed a little in retreat. These smaller compartments, as well as the niches formed at the points of retreat of the wall, are all overlaid by sculpture of great variety. The wheels of the temple, to which reference has already been made, are carved here at intervals ; and they too are decorated with figures of dancing women, with fluttering scarves, in order to give an impression of stately motion which is associated with chariot-wheels.

It must be remembered that all these sculptures in the stylobate, as well as on the wall of the Rekha and Jagamohan, to which we shall come later, are of the nature of space-compositions. The horizontal and vertical sub-divisions on the surface of the wall set certain limitations to the form of the figures, and so the figures are there, firstly, to fill in the open spaces, and, secondly, to emphasize the theme which forms the subject matter of the whole temple.

The Sun is the emblem of life ; and all that is living in this spacious world, all that throbs passionately with the breath of life, has been given adequate expression in the temple of the Sun-god. That was the reason why processions of animals found their place at the base of the stylobate. These figures of elephants and of horses



PL. V.

A PENCIL SKETCH FROM KONARAKA

and lions not only added a sense of firmness to the entire structure, but also emphasized the idea that the manifestations of life are to be discovered and duly appraised not only in the world of men, but also in the world to which the animals belong.

The sculptures which follow on the surface of the stylobate above the base are mostly of human beings. But where the wall has been cut up by deep recesses, there the sculptors placed mythical figures of *viratas*, i. e. of lions trampling upon elephants, in order to overcome the sense of insecurity which might come from cutting up the wall into smaller fragments. These *virata* figures just overcome that sense of weakness ; but they do not form the main theme of the sculpture on the stylobate.

This is formed by different aspects of human life ; and more specially those forms of it which are considered vulgar or obscene. On the stylobate, as it is now, there are no less than two hundred and eighty-six figures of men and women in amorous embrace. But besides these there are also many scenes of combat and hunting. There are also representations of handsome women displaying the beauty of their well-formed bodies. Much has been written about the figures of men and women in sexual embrace which appear so frequently on Orissan temples. Some have tried to attach a deeply mystic significance to them, while others have condemned them as the result of a debased national taste. But if we examine these figures with less prejudice and more discrimination, we soon discover that there was neither mystic meaning nor any special love for the obscene in the minds of men who created these images. Quite frequently, the man in amorous embrace with a woman happened to be one with matted hair, and an alms-bowl and a thin strip of cloth round his loins. It was a *sannyasin* in full array—caught in the ecstasy of the forbidden pleasures of love. Our sculptors seem to have taken a superb delight in portraying life on many fronts.

It was an intensely human age, and the artists of that age were in love not only with all that was great or heroic in life, but also with everything that was human. In our pious zeal, we may find fault with the vulgarity of the age of Konarak ; but we must remember that if the men of that age made love to women so openly, so flagrantly, they could also build a temple, the parallel of which could never be produced today.

That the artists of Konarak looked upon love or sex, half seriously and half in amusement is quite apparent from the subjects

which they chose for depiction. But that they were not caught inextricably in the obsession of sexual life, that their mind remained free to appreciate all that was greater in human life, this is proved abundantly by the sculptures which follow as we mount higher and higher along the body of the temple.

As we reach the pyramidal roof of the Jagamohan, the amorous scenes disappear altogether. They are followed by what might be described as purer forms of art. Life-sized women appear as they dance and play upon the cymbal, flute and the drum. The moment chosen for depiction is not when the dancers have given themselves up in absolute abandon to riotous movement, for such movement is foreign to the spirit of Konarak, but when their movements are yet restrained and dignified, though full of a vitality which fits in admirably with the spirit of the entire scheme of sculptures. The god Siva also appears with these women on the narrow terrace above the first tier of the roof; and he is depicted as dancing his dance of death upon a frail boat which is rowed by two frail human beings. Perhaps the neighbourhood of the sea, and the frequent scenes of boats being tossed about heavily by the storms which harass this coast, put the idea of changing the foot-rest of Siva from a bull or a trampled demon into a boat, in the mind of the artists of Konarak.

The frieze at the edge of the horizontal courses of stone which make up the tiers of the roof are also decorated with royal processions or sometimes with animal figures; while the vertical walls which separate the tiers from one another are decorated with beautiful figures of handsome women standing under trees, or, occasionally, caressing a body which rests upon their arms.

As we mount still higher, even the gods disappear and only women remain in various poses of dancing. The figures here are as well executed as those on the tier below; but there is a special technical point to be noticed in connection with their anatomy at this point. The platform between the central and the uppermost tier, which we find here, is about a hundred feet or more from the ground. The dancing women have not been placed exactly on the edge but a little backwards, so that their feet and legs are screened from the observer on the ground by the projection of the lower horizontal courses. The upright space left free for the figures to stand is also less than a man's height, i.e. less than that of the dancing figures on the tier below. The artist, instead of creating a properly proportioned human figure suited to the space available here, did one brave thing. He built the upper part of



PL. VI.

THE DANCE OF SIVA



PL. VII.

FRIEZE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE TEMPLE



HEAD OF A WOMAN

PL. VIII.

the female figures almost in the same proportion as he had built the ones below ; but he shortened the body waist downwards in such a manner that they look distinctly ugly when seen from close quarters. But as the figures were not meant to be seen from close quarters, they look of the right proportions when seen from below, i. e. from the courtyard of the temple. One of the most handsome faces of women ever sculptured in Orissa is to be found in one of these dancing figures of the second tier.

When we leave the tiers below us, we come upon a space where crouching lions support the bell-shaped capital at the top. The bell is ribbed on its surface, but there is no more ornamental work to decorate the walls in the neighbourhood. On the top of the bell comes the flattened spheroid held up by crouching human figures. This too is practically undecorated. Then came the water-pot, and the full-blown lotus right at the top, both of which have now disappeared, but of which we read in the old temple-records left to us.

The whole temple of Konarak is thus ornamented with a succession of sculpture which are mostly animal or human in design. The range begins with elephants, horses and mythical figures, runs through the lower passions of humanity to the more chaste pleasures of music and dancing. The full-blown lotus is the symbol of completeness ; and, in order to show that all aspects of life had been given their due place in the scheme, the lotus was added as a fitting finial to the temple of the Sun-god who was the origin and the lord of all life.

There can be no doubt that the temple of Konarak is a masterpiece of architecture. Its form alone proves it to be so. But the wonderful manner, in which the sculpture has been laid to decorate it, has not only emphasized what the temple was meant to say, but has transformed it into the greatest example of architecture that India has ever produced.

One often feels surprised that the name of the great architect, who designed the temple or planned its ornamentation, is not known to us. The name has been completely forgotten, and many stories have sprung up round the builders of the temple. There can be no doubt that the design must have been the work of one man. But the temple was so vast, and must have taken so long to build, that one particular architect with a band of labourers could never have been responsible for its execution. It must have taken a whole generation of artists, and many hundreds of them, to bring about such a task to its completion. But the unity of design has nowhere

been disturbed. This shows abundantly that although the conception was of one man, yet the other artists entered so completely into the spirit of the thing as to make the execution seem to be the work of one man.

The temple of Konarak, then, is not the creation of a freak of genius, but is rather the creation of an age and of an entire society which felt unified in spirit as well as in activity. And that is perhaps the reason why no architect has left his name to be associated with the building of the temple. Perhaps he felt that the temple was the artistic expression of a great age to which he himself belonged, so that he preferred to remain submerged in the society which had given birth to that age. Konarak is not a lyrical poem like the Taj ; it is more like an epic which incorporated the thoughts and aspirations of an entire epoch of civilisation, and which is continued in the succeeding generations of heroic men.

At first sight, the ruins of Konarak do not impress one so forcibly as one might expect. But after a time as we become more and more familiar with the design and scheme of ornamentation of the temple, the whole thing grows in our mind and we seem to be overwhelmed and ultimately identified in spirit with that age of great heroism and of immense activity.

It was, indeed, a great age, full of heroism ; intensely human and realistic, the like of which India has never seen again. But one feels humbled when one realises that the same country, which was great enough to produce the temple of Konarak, has been reduced today into one of the poorest provinces of India. When one witnesses such transformations, one feels chastened and feels almost afraid to take pride in the achievements of our own age, for they too will one day be laid low by the hand of time.



GAṆAPATI—(continued)

HARIDAS MITRA

SECTION 7.

Gaṇeśa worship seems to have undergone many transformations and modifications.

Attention has already been drawn to the double character of Gaṇeśa as a bestower of gifts *siddhi-dātā*, and as remover and creator of obstacles *vighnanāśin*, and *vighnarāja* or *vighneśa*—literally meaning 'lord' or 'master', or rather, 'creator of obstacles' *i.e.* 'the Arch mischief-maker'. The *Gāṇapatyas* seem to have been conscious of this apparently contradictory nature of the Gaṇeśa conception and are at great pains to explain it away. They had, therefore, to invent legends.

'Once, King Abhinandana was performing a sacrifice, in which he did not reserve a share of the offerings for Indra. Enraged at this, the latter called Kāla and ordered him to destroy the sacrifice. He (Kāla Puruṣa) was aware that all good acts lead to the purification of mind which is the cause of the knowledge of Brahman, and that a person possessing such knowledge becomes deathless, *amṛtamaya*. Aware of the potent effect of pious deeds and of the fact that evil-minded people without merit would be under his power, Kāla assumed the form of a demon, called Vighnāsura.

After killing Abhinandana, Kāla thereafter began hampering pious deeds, here and there, openly or in disguise. Unable to recognise Kāla and being terrified by him, the sages Vaśiṣṭha and others sought the protection of Brahman and being directed by the latter, they appeased *Pārśva-putra* Gaṇeśa¹, as no other deity had the power to destroy Kāla. Thereupon the demon Vighna was defeated by Gaṇeśa and he sought the latter's mercy. Then, Gaṇeśa made Vighna subservient to his own commands and assumed the title of 'Vighna-rāja' at the latter's request. From that time, it was arranged, Vighna would make his appearance at any pious ceremony where Gaṇeśa etc. are not worshipped or invoked. Having made this stipulation Gaṇeśa put this Vighna near-by his own self'.——Thus it has been related in the *Vināyaka-māhātmya* of the *Skanda Purāṇam* and also in the *Maudgala-Purāṇam*.

1. *Ahnikā Candrikā*: *Gāṇapatyatharva-ṣiṣam*. *Subhāṣyam* (Nirṇayasāgara Press, 1903), pp. 194-95.

In fact these peculiar interpretations of Vighnarāja or Vighneśa in the above mythical account seem rather to point to a time, when Gaṇeśa was yet a malevolent deity, whom one must dread and propitiate. For compare with this, the history of the popular village deity of Bengal, entitled Maṅgala Caṇḍī.²

Gaṇeśa was generally styled as *Vighna* 'obstacle', or *Vighnarāja* 'Chief of obstacles' by the Buddhists. He was the rascally and irascible son of Indra.³

The Nepalese Buddhist *Svayambhū* or *Svayambhuva Purāṇam* gives the story how the deity Vighnāntaka was specially brought into being or materialised for checking the mischievous Gaṇeśa⁴. This story is preserved in two nearly identical versions⁵ none of which is however to be found in the printed edition of the *Svayambhū Purāṇam*. The latter

2. (a) Though *Maṅgala-Caṇḍī* is generally regarded as 'the Caṇḍī of auspicious power,' or even, as 'the guardian deity of a king called Maṅgala' (in *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa, Prakṛti Khaṇḍa*), a different and peculiar interpretation is given by the Bengali Poet Mādhavācārya whose work is well-known in and around the eastern district of Chittagong. The poet was a contemporary of Akbar and wrote his *Caṇḍī-Kāvya* about 1580 A.C. Mādhavācārya thus interprets the name.

মঙ্গলদৈত্য বধি মাতা হৈলা মঙ্গলচণ্ডী ।

'The Goddess killed a demon called Maṅgala, whence the name Maṅgala Caṇḍī' (See Tārāprasanna Bhaṭṭācāryya's article, *Prācīna Vaṅśasāhitye Caṇḍī-Maṅgala*. V.S.P.P., Vol. 26, p. 151.)

(b) The Mythical stories of Gaṇeśa from the subject matter of a modern *Bhāṣā-Kāvya*, vernacular epic poem in Bengalee called *Gaṇeśa-sambhava Kāvya*, (Part I in seven *Sargas*. By Matilāl Datta. Khulna, Mūlghaḍa. Kārttika, 1293 B.S.). dedicated to Paṇḍit Īśvaracandra Vidyāsāgara.

The poem was regarded by eminent literary men and critics of the time, as excellent. It was composed in a sort of mixed verse half-metrical, half-prose (without fixed lengths of measures) which had to be read with special care to the pauses.

(c) The well-known Bengali Poem of Late Satyendranāth Datta about the Javanese *Kāpālīka Gaṇeśa* must also be mentioned.

3. *Ārya-Maṇjuśrī-mūlakaḷpa*. Part III, (Ed. Gaṇapati Sāstrin's, *Triv. Skt. Series*, No. LXXXIV, 1925), 83 *Paṭalavisāra*.

4. (a) Sylvain Lévi : *Annales du Musée Guimet, Bibliothèque d'études. Le Népal* Vol. I, pp. 208-212.

(b) Benoytosh Bhattacharya : *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*. (Oxford Univ. Press, 1924). S.V. *Vighnāntaka*.

5. (a) One version of the story is known from inscriptions in mixed sanskrit on a big Nepalese painted scroll. It has vivid illustrations in colour and is divided into bands; the spaces between these are filled with numbered descriptions which correspond to the scenes depicted. It was presented by B. H. Hodgson to the Library of the Institute de France. The painting is one continuous illustration of *Svayambhū Purāṇam*, or more exactly of the *Svayambhuva Purāṇam*. It is reproduced with translations of descriptions and discussed in Prof. Sylvain Lévi's *Le Népal*. Vol. III, pp. 158-178, Section 62; and Vol. I, plate at the end, entitled "La Légende sacrée du Népal".

(b) The other version of the story is given in the *Dharma-kośa-saṃgraha*, a modern Nepalese MS. compilation from the *Svayambhū Purāṇam*, done nearly a century ago by *Vajracārya* Paṇḍit Amṛtānanda of the Nepalese court at the request of Resident Hodgson. (See Manomohana Gaṅgopādhyāya's article, *Nepāle prāpta Bauddha-mūrti*. V.S.P.P., Vol. 29, No. 4.).

is a recent compilation, but probably it reproduces a recognised and sensibly older model and is preserved in at least five different recensions.⁶

The following is the story of the origin of the Buddhist deity Vighnāntaka riding on Gaṇeśa *Gaṇeśa-vāhana*, preserved in two slightly different versions.⁷

"Once upon a time, a Master from Oḍiyāna *Adriyācārya* or *Oḍiyacarya*, for acquiring the eight magical powers *Aṣṭa-siddhiḥ*, took his seat on an elephant-skin on the banks of the river Vāgmatī [under a meditation-pavillion *Yoga-maṇḍapa*, decorated with umbrellas, flags and flower-garlands], and began his mystic rites.

[While worship of the Buddha, Dharma, Saṅgha and the Lokapālas were taking place] Gaṇeśa arrived there to amuse himself in the waters of the Vāgmatī and was irritated to find a magician seated on an elephant-skin. [Gaṇeśa discovered that his own image was not in the temple. So, he angrily ordered to his *gaṇas*: 'Destroy and batter to pieces the *Adriyācārya* sitting on elephant skin, who stands in the way of my being worshipped'. Then a great fight took place. गजचर्मस्थमद्रियाचार्यं अस्मत्पूजाप्रतिबन्धकं विध्वंसय चूषाय इति । तथेति तथैव जातो महान् युद्धः]

Gaṇeśa called to his aid the *Pūṭanas* and the *Kaṭapūṭanas* and put *Adriyācārya* into a hard plight. Then the Master of Oḍiyāna called to his aid the *Ṣaḍakṣarī*; the latter brought in the *Daśakrodhas* and Gaṇeśa had to give way.

[ततः षडक्षरीप्रभावात् दशक्रोधेषु विनिःसृतेषु गणेशवाहनविघ्नान्तकं आलोक्य गणेशोऽसौ पलायितः । पलायितस्यापि एकदन्तः विघ्नान्तकेन उन्मूलितः । ततो निर्मदः गणेशोऽसौ ओडियाचार्यमापन्नः । Then among the *Krodhas* which came out through the power of the *Ṣaḍakṣarī*, Gaṇeśa discovered the Vighnāntaka riding on Gaṇeśa and he tried to bolt away. But the Vighnāntaka overtook him and pulled out one tooth of his.⁸ Then the humbled Gaṇeśa sought the protection of the Oḍiyācārya and prayed: 'O Master! O Ācārya! I have become Buddhist.' From that time Gaṇeśa had a place in the Buddhist ceremonies of worship]."

Mahākāla is yet another terrible Buddhist god, who tramples on Gaṇeśa⁹ (the demon Vinataka of the Buddhists) and his female counterpart¹⁰.

6. Sylvain Lévi: *Le Népal*. Vol. III, pp. 159-160; Vol. I, pp. 208-212.

7. This is the version of the Nepalese painted scroll. The differences in the other version are put within brackets.

8. Cf. *Paṭṭha* of the Buddhist *Sādhana*s, meaning a tooth, according to the Lexicons. See Monier Williams: *Skt. Dict.*, S.V.; Also, for '*Danta*', a weapon—see K. P. Jayaswal: *J.B.O.R.S.*, Vol. XVIII, Sept.-Dec. 1932.

9. According to another Buddhist story, Gaṇeśa was the merchant, *sārtha-vaha* of the gods in heaven and through his own merit incarnated himself as the son of Mahādeva. He is the *Nirmāṇa-Kāya* of Āryāvalokiteśvara. So both,

The Buddhists conceived of a separate *Śakti* or consort for Gaṇeśa called Gaṇeśa-hṛdayā¹¹.

Gaṇeśa was early adopted into the Buddhistic Pantheon. But he occupied there only an insignificant and degraded position. Even, the most important Brāhmaṇic deities, Śiva, Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Indra, etc., were described as *duṣṭa-raudra-devatās* mischievous terrible deities, and uniformly designated as 'catur-māras', or 'the four evil ones', by the Buddhists and were subjected to abject humiliation by male and female Buddhist deities. Sometimes the Brāhmaṇic deities are disgracefully represented, in positions of *coitus* with their respective *Śaktis* and as being kicked and trampled upon by more terrible Buddhist ones.

These facts might have reflected, as pointed out¹² by Benoytosh Bhattacharya, a spirit of religious intolerance on the part of the Buddhists ; but more probably all these would again point to a time, when at least Gaṇeśa was yet a malevolent deity, who could both be a powerful ally and a dangerous obstacle.

For it is significant that some of the most eminent Buddhist saints prepared Sanskrit originals and Tibetan translations of several works of the *Gāṇaṭya* cult. These are to be found in the Encyclopaedic compilations the *Tanjur* and the *Kanjur*.¹³ Among the original authors and translators of *Gāṇaṭya* works we find such eminent names as :—

Advayavajra belonging to the *Sabara-siddhācārya* etc.

Amoghavajra (8th Century, A.C.).

Śrīkṛṣṇapāda of Orissa.

Gayādhara.

Candrakīrti.

Gaṇapati and Mahākāla are gods of the same *Bhūmi*. Though Mahākāla tramples upon Gaṇeśa, he is by no means a deity of a higher plane. See Manomohana Gaṅgopādhyāya's article, *Nepāle prāpta Bauddha-mūrti*. V.S.P.P., Vol. 29, No. 4.

10. Alice Getty : *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*. (Oxf. Clarendon Press, 1914). See under *Mahākāla*.—Also see Manomohana Gaṅgopādhyāya's article referred to in Note 9 above.

11. Benoytosh Bhattacharya : *The Ind. Buddh. Ic*. See under *Gaṇapati-hṛdayā*.

12. Benoytosh Bhattacharya : *Op. Cit.* See under *Parṇasavarī* p. 84;—*Gaṇapati* p. 142; *Vighnāntaka* p. 143;—*Aparājitā* p. 153. See also his article, *Identification of a Nalanda stone Image*. J.B.O.R.S., Vol. IX, Parts III & IV, p. 397, and his article on *Aparājitā* in *Prācī* (Dacca), 1331 B.S., No. 1, Āṣāḍha, pp. 18-22.

Śiva, Saṁkara, Kārttikeya etc. are all *Yakṣas* in the *Mahāmāyūrī* List. See Ananda K. Coomaraswamy : *Yakṣas*. *Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections*. Vol. 80, No. 6, 1928, pp. 12 and 29).

But *Gaṇeśa*, as such, is not at all mentioned, though *Lambodara* and *Vighna* figure in the list "La liste de la *Mahāmāyūrī*, par un ensemble concordant d'indications, correspondent à l'inde des trois ou quatre premiers siècles ap. J.-C." Sylvain Lévi : *Le Catalogue géographique de Yakṣa dans le Mahāmāyūrī*, JA., 1915.

13. For lists of *Gāṇaṭya* works, see A. C. Körösi : *Analysis of the Kaṅgyur*. *Asiatic Researches* Vol. 20, 1836; Cordier : *Catalogue du fonds tibétain de la Bibliothèque Nationale*. *Index du Bstan-Hgyur*. Also, see Appendix

Dipaṅkara Srijñāna Atīśa of Vikramaśilā (11th Century A.C.).

Dombi-heruka, king of Magadha.

Tathāgatarakṣita of Vikramaśilā.

Vairocana of Kośala.

Candrakīrtti of Suvarṇadvīpa.

Many of these teachers and saints are also known from other sources, e.g. as authors of *Caryāpadas* in the *Sandhā-bhāṣā*¹⁴, the mystic language of the Buddhists¹⁵.

14. See Haraprasāda Sāstri : Introduction, *Bhūmikā* to his *Bauddha Gāṇ o Dōhā* (V.S. *Parīṣad*, 1323); Vidhushekhara Sāstri : *I.H.O.* Vol. IV, 1928, pp. 287 ff; Prabodh ch. Bāgchī : *I.H.O.*, Vol. V, 1930, pp. 389 ff.

15. The learned Brāhmaṇa Rāhula or Rāhula-Bhadra, known also under the name of the Grand Brāhmaṇa or Śrī-Saraha exercised the function of Professor at Nālandā. He was initiated to the doctrine, by the Sage Kṛṣṇa. However, it is to Gaṇeśa and to other superior Gods that the Grand Brāhmaṇa was under the greatest obligations; it is from them really, that he received the *Sūtras* and the *Tantras* of *Mahāyāna*. These legends contain the hidden acknowledgment that Śivaism played a very great part in the development of Mahāyāna in general. See—H. Kern : *Annales du Musée Guimet. Histoire du Bouddhisme dans l'Inde*. II, p. *400.

Also, see—E. Burnouf : *Introduction à l'histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*. (Paris, 1876) Section V. *Tantras*.—Alliance du Bouddhisme avec çivaïsme, p. 485 ff.

Gaṇeśa is associated with the legends of Padma-Sambhava and of the two Brāhmaṇa brothers Mudgara-Gomin and Saṅkarapati, who visited Śiva on Kailāsa and having returned to their lands rendered all sorts of meritorious services to the Religion. See Grünwedel : *Mythologie du Bouddhisme au Tibet et en Mongolie*. (Leipzig, 1900) p. 55; and H. Kern : *Op. Cit.* II, p. *428.

MY HEART FEELS SHY

My heart feels shy to bring to your vagrant mind
the lyric of my secret
lest its meaning be missed
and its rhythm.

I shall wait for some auspicious hour
when the evening is compassionate,
your eyes drowned in its dimness,
and my voice reaches you
in a profound calm of truth.

I shall turn my secret round and round
through my whisper
at a lonely corner of your heart,
even as the cricket among the silent *sal* trees
turns single-toned beads of its chirping
in the rosary of night.

Rabindranath Tagore

THE ORIGIN OF THE HINDUSTHANI RAGAS¹

Hemendra Lal Roy

HINDUSTHANI *rāgas* remain at best a mystery, not only to the layman but to the musician as well. Any criticism by the former is likely to be vague, while the latter knows hardly anything better than applying certain principles traditionally, without a clear notion of their significance. The musician will usually say that a *rāga* has its particular ascent and descent of the notes up and down the scale (*āroha* and *avaroha*), it may emphasise certain notes here and there (*vāḍī* and *samvāḍī*), it may be grouped according to the scale or the characteristic features in the scale (*melu* or *that* and *aṅga*), certain notes may have their usual pitch sharpened or flattened (*srutis*), and there he stops. Such bare and fragmentary statements leave much to be desired. Why should the ascent and descent be deemed so important? Why do we stress certain notes and not others or, for that matter, why should we stress at all? Whence do improvisations (*alapa*) come which distinguish the *rāga* so vividly from an ordinary song? These and similar questions never trouble the musician, for he can do without such fine probings into the matter. But the curious never remains long satisfied with apparently arbitrary laws and he gradually comes to see that these problems are insoluble as long as the evolution of the *rāga* is not taken into account. If he be a singer himself, he would find that this asset is of no great help to him in his search for the origin; for he, like all other musicians, learns the *rāga* directly by hearing it sung by others. He never passes through a preliminary or intermediate stage where he may observe the *rāga* in the making, which may supply a clue to this enigma of a *rāga*. As to the origin, the average musician unhesitatingly consigns it to the care of the *rishis*—ancient sages. But from the Sanskrit treatises on music it is clear that *rāgas* once current had disappeared and were replaced by new *rāgas*, and this has been taking place at all times. From this one naturally concludes that *rāgas* are being created even now as in the previous ages. The question needs a closer examination.

¹ Adapted from the writer's Introduction to his book *Hindusthani Music, its Nature, Origin and Development*, to be published shortly.

The *rāga* is not an exotic growth on the Indian soil. As a complex type of music, it should have been preceded by simpler kinds ; but the only simpler kinds are the common folk songs which do not seem to observe any law, nor seem to be guided by any principles. The suspicion that the two may be related in some way naturally arises in the mind. At first sight, the *raga* and the folk-song seem totally different in their structure : the one seems regulated, the other built on haphazard and whimsical lines. But more careful attention will reveal certain similar features and it will be found that there is at least one very living link between the two forms, which may be stated thus.

A *rāga* is not merely a development of themes or characteristic features (*ālāpa*) in a scale. It contains songs and depends on them for its sustenance and nourishment. These songs have certain distinctive features. Folk-songs as songs should contain similar features and we shall see that they do. Secondly the *rāgas* which are brought into existence with the help of the Thumri type of Hindusthani music are intimately connected with folk-music. Any careful observer will at once detect that the Thumri is but another name of folk-songs in a polished garb. The disguise is so clever and artistic, that even the folk will scarcely recognise their own elements in it, in spite of the occurrence of the folk-tunes with their peculiar combinations of notes intact in many places. The fact is that the whole process is so unconscious that it is difficult to bring it under a clear perspective.

There is another serious handicap, which is that a *raga* proper takes at least half a century to mature. It is not created or manufactured at will, as some may imagine, by introducing a note here and omitting a note there in the scales. Such artificial attempts, as the history of Hindusthani music will amply show, have always failed and the musician has turned again and again to the spontaneous production of *ragas* among musicians and the common folk-singers alike. Not that the musician is not a creator ; he too creates owing to his superior aesthetic equipment but he usually bases the *raga* on suggestions and hints received from others. The *raga* is hardly, if ever, the creation of one man. It is built, as we shall see as we proceed, by the joint and co-operative efforts of several composers. It is this slow growth of it and the presence of many actors on the stage that make the task of bringing the *raga* under a close scrutiny almost impossible and hazardous.

And yet one should take the risk of presenting this novel

approach (it is not so new as it may appear, for this outlook was not unknown to our ancient grammarians of music) to the study of the Hindusthani *ragas*, if a coherent and intelligible explanation of music is our ideal. Our method will be to discover important and similar features in folk and *raga* music. How can we do that ? We have already mentioned that the folk music and *raga* music come into close relation in producing the Thumri type. Two types cannot combine in a joint effort unless they are related somewhere in an intimate way. For the right understanding of our problem we require a knowledge of the basic features of both the folk and *raga* music. If we turn first to folk-music hoping that it will reveal its character, being the simpler type, we shall be disappointed. The features that lie hidden in simple things are not so easily discovered. There the unrelated and the chaotic preponderate barring from view the indistinct thread of the related and the systematic. It is better, therefore, to turn to the *ragas*.

How do we learn a *rāga* ? The student is at first asked to learn a few songs of the *rāga* under question and, along with the songs, to hear, as often as he can, musicians developing that particular variety. Let us begin with the songs of a common *rāga*, say *Desa*, and try to find out, if possible, anything remarkable in the process of learning it. First we see the songs are similar but not exactly alike. It means that they contain a common characteristic and each individual song contains something over and above it. This common characteristic is contained in the ascent and descent in the scale (*āroha* and *avaroha*), and if it is *Desa*, it will be something like this: Ascent : *s, r, mp, ns*. Descent : *s, n (ni flat) dp, mgr, r, rgs*.¹

When we say that the progression of each song will be guided by this, we do not mean that each will go up and come down strictly following the given direction. There may be many ways of doing this but all will conform more or less to the pattern of the given ascent and descent. Had this not been the case, the *raga* could never have been composed. Each song brings its own contribution and enriches the *ragu*. Gradually as these contributions accumulate, the development (*alapa*) of the *raga* is born. So *alapa* comes in when there is a considerable number of songs composed in the *rāga*. We cannot go into details here giving examples. Let us rather attempt an analogy and try to represent the principles of *raga*-creation visually.

1 *s* = *Sa* = *C*, *r* = *Re* = *D*, *g* = *Ga* = *E*, *m* = *Ma* = *F*, *h* = *Pa* = *G*, *d* = *Dha* = *A*, *n* = *Ni* = *B*.

Let us compare the *raga* to a species of flower, say the rose, taking each individual song for a particular variety of the rose. Now one variety of the rose may not resemble another in colour or smell, but certain features in each stamp it indubitably as a rose. Let us arrange the different varieties of the rose (as far as possible) in such a manner that one specimen shades off into another. If a sequence of pictures of the roses is now photographed on a film and is projected on a screen with the help of a cinematograph, very nearly a *raga* of the rose will result. A certain common feature persists on the screen in the case of the rose and on the ear in the case of the *raga*.

Now we know something about the nature of a song in relation to *ālapa*, the latter being very conspicuous in a *raga*. With this equipment, we are in a position to analyse the folk-song. Can we detect similar features in them? Songs do not seem to be closely related to one another in folk-music, but the investigator need not be baffled by this apparent lack of types. We soon see that folk-tunes are not so chaotic as they seem: they too could be grouped. What goes by the name of a "popular" tune in folk-music is a tune which one singer catches from another, and, making some slight alterations, perhaps composes a second song in it. The tune is similar, though the songs may not be identical. The degree of accommodation varies with the tunes. The musician selects those which appear to have the greatest elasticity, that is, which allow him to create and improvise, keeping the essence of the tune undisturbed. He may himself hit upon one, though such an occurrence is rare, since no *raga* worth the name has been brought into existence in recent time by the effort of a single musician. When a tune of this nature is found, several musicians may soon join in the production. The scope of *ālapa* (development or improvisations round the theme) increases with the number of artistically composed songs, and sooner or later a full-fledged *raga* comes into existence.

In the first stage of creation the musician must keep close to the folk-tune and retain some characteristic folk-flavour. Gradually he recedes until a time comes when the folk will scarcely recognise their own elements in the musician's rendering of the songs. Such a process is taking place at present in the Thumri type of music and analogous transformations have always been present in the history of Hindusthani music.

A discussion of the four main styles of singing the *ragas*, i. e. Dhrupad, Kheyāl, Tappa and Thumri, will throw further light on this

give-and-take between the *raga* and folk-music. They are not merely styles ; they play different roles in the evolution of the Hindusthani *ragas*. All the *ragas* can be sung in Dhrupad style. Kheyal can be sung in all *ragas* except those sung in Thumri and Tappa (which is similar in spirit to Thumri) styles. Thumri and Tappa accommodate only a few *ragas*. How are we to account for the strange fact that *ragas* like Khambaj, Bhairabi, Kafi, Gara, Pilu, Jhinjhoti and Tilak-kamod will adapt themselves to Dhrupad or Thumri but not to Kheyal ?

We may explain it in this way. In the first stage, along with Thumri, Dhrupad (lit. *Dhruva-pada*, permanent or dependable songs) songs begin to be composed as soon as a popular tune is available, but they are done on classical and severe lines. These compositions store, as it were, as many characteristic songs as possible. With Thumri and Dhrupad in the field, Kheyal tarries behind and appears only when Thumri has finished its polishing up of the tunes and Dhrupad has evolved the development (*alapa*) from the collected songs. Kheyal then borrows the *alapa* from the one and style from the other and, combining the two, brings a new and rich style into being. Kheyal is thus a natural development of Thumri, based on *alapa* received from Dhrupad. Dhrupad obtains the tunes from the Thumri experimentation, re-issuing them with its distinctive stamp. So Thumri or Tappa, which we use here as a general term for the first stage of experimentation with folk-tunes, proves to be the ultimate source of all styles.

Thumri is always in a experimental and unstable state. It is not sure of itself like a pretty young girl with the delicate bloom of childhood about her and uncertain in her moods. This uncertainty adds charm and freshness to Thumri but the impression is not lasting. It will be tiresome to hear Thumri for more than a fraction of an hour, whereas other types like Kheyal and Dhrupad can be continued for hours. With more stable types these two reach depth and precision of form . Thumri types do not survive as distinctive styles though there must always be a Thumri type to provide facilities for experimentation and innovation. Kheyal and Dhrupad build on the material obtained from it. But stability has its defect, for after a period of stable security, Kheyal and Dhrupad tend to become static and traditional. Then in despair they turn to music pulsating with life in the midst of the general mass and become heartened and refreshed. An illustration may be given. Kheyal sometime ago

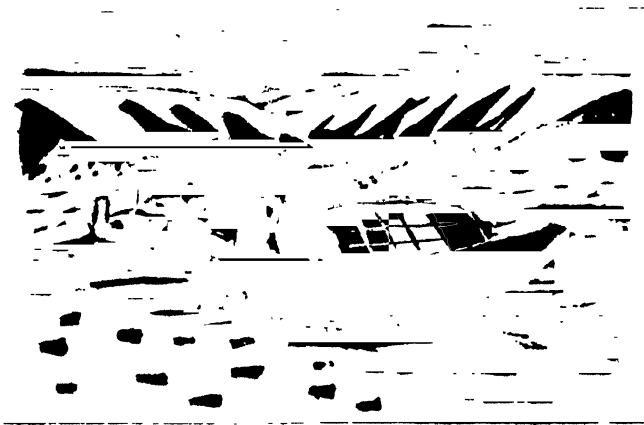
showed signs of decay and Tappa, which was the prevalent style then based on folk-tunes, contributed substantially to enrich and enliven it. Anyone who sings Kheyal knows how indebted the modern Kheyal is to Tappa. But Kheyal assimilated as much of Tappa as was necessary for beauty and variety. The orthodox musician mourns to this day the down-fall of Kheyal. They do not perceive that another change is creeping up when Kheyal will be compelled to borrow from Thumri if it has not already done so.

Can we not find a *raga* which has just passed its Thumri or Tappa stage and has been incorporated in Kheyal? The *raga* Desa seems to be a suitable illustration to the point. Thirty or forty years ago it was not difficult to hear Desa in Tappa or Thumri style (for example, the Desa songs sung by Moijuddin, Johrabai and Gaharjan preserved in gramophone records) but it has almost died out at the present time. Now the Kheyal style predominates. On the other hand if one watches carefully, one is sure to find traces of the *ragas* in folk-music like Jayjayanti, Deskar, Kalingra, Paraj, Gouri, Sohini (Suddhama variety), Gaudmallar (Khamaj That), Sarang, in addition to the *ragas* mentioned with reference to Thumri. Names of *ragas* like Multani, Jampurī, Kanada, Gurjari, Bangala, Malavi, Sorati and Sindhu indicate their places of origin and show that *ragas* are also collected from different parts of the country.

It may be argued the other way. The folk-people might have borrowed these tunes from the musicians. There is hardly any possibility of the selection of tunes by the folk from the *ragas*. It takes at least half a dozen years for the musically gifted to gain his first tolerable acquaintance with a *raga* and very few among the folks enjoy such continued contact with *raga* music. The folk-tune consists of a few phrases repeated monotonously with a little improvisation, and usually extends only to part of the octave. It is not the *raga* but cheap tunes that percolate through the masses. Yet some of those very tunes often supply the nuclei of the *ragas* and might be called potential *ragas* in an undeveloped state.

We have only discussed here the aspect of ascent and descent of the notes in the scale with relation to *ragas*, as this is the most important and prominent feature. The emphasized notes (*vadi* and *samvauli*), their intonation (*srutis*) and the classification of the *ragas* follow naturally from this approach. The question now presents itself: can we substantiate this theory from our findings in the treatises on music written in ancient or mediaeval times? The answer is that not

only there is sufficient proof that the writers on music also analysed in this light but many obscure passages could only be explained by keeping this view of the matter in sight. But it is a long story. It may suffice here to state that even the Vedic grammarians recognised certain song-types, and some melody-types, akin to the present *ragas*, were existing in the first few centuries of the Christian era. The evolution of *ragas* seems to have occurred not only in India but in several culture-areas of the Near East, i.e. Egypt, Arabia and Persia. These might have been parallel developments or the idea might have spread by diffusion. Diffusion with local modifications, which has been useful in explaining similar cultural heritages, may prove a useful hypothesis.



NOTES ON ORNAMENTAL ART (*continued*)

Nandalal Bose

DIFFERENT "forms" appeal to different peoples, determining the national character of their decorative art.

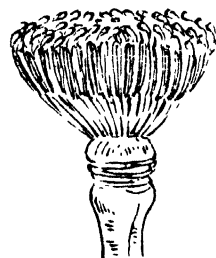
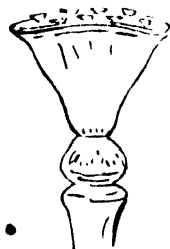
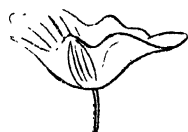
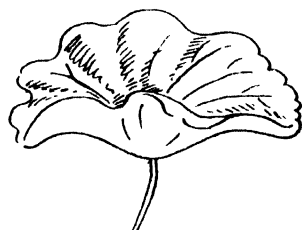
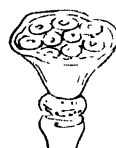
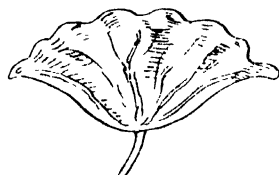
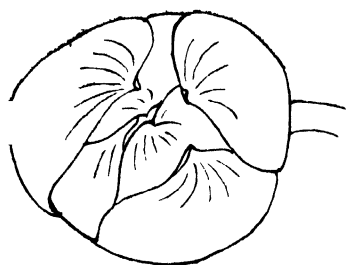
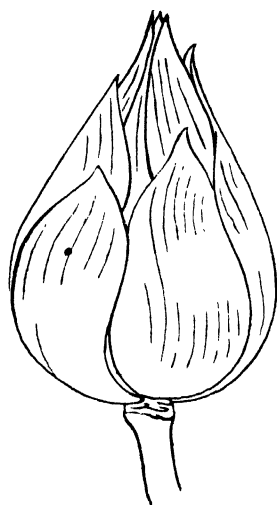
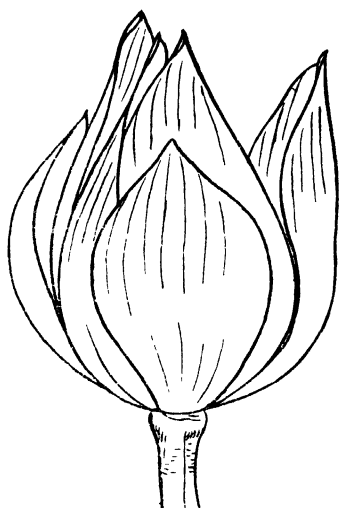
These forms are suggested to them by flowers and fruits, or animals and birds, or by such natural elements as water, fire, etc.

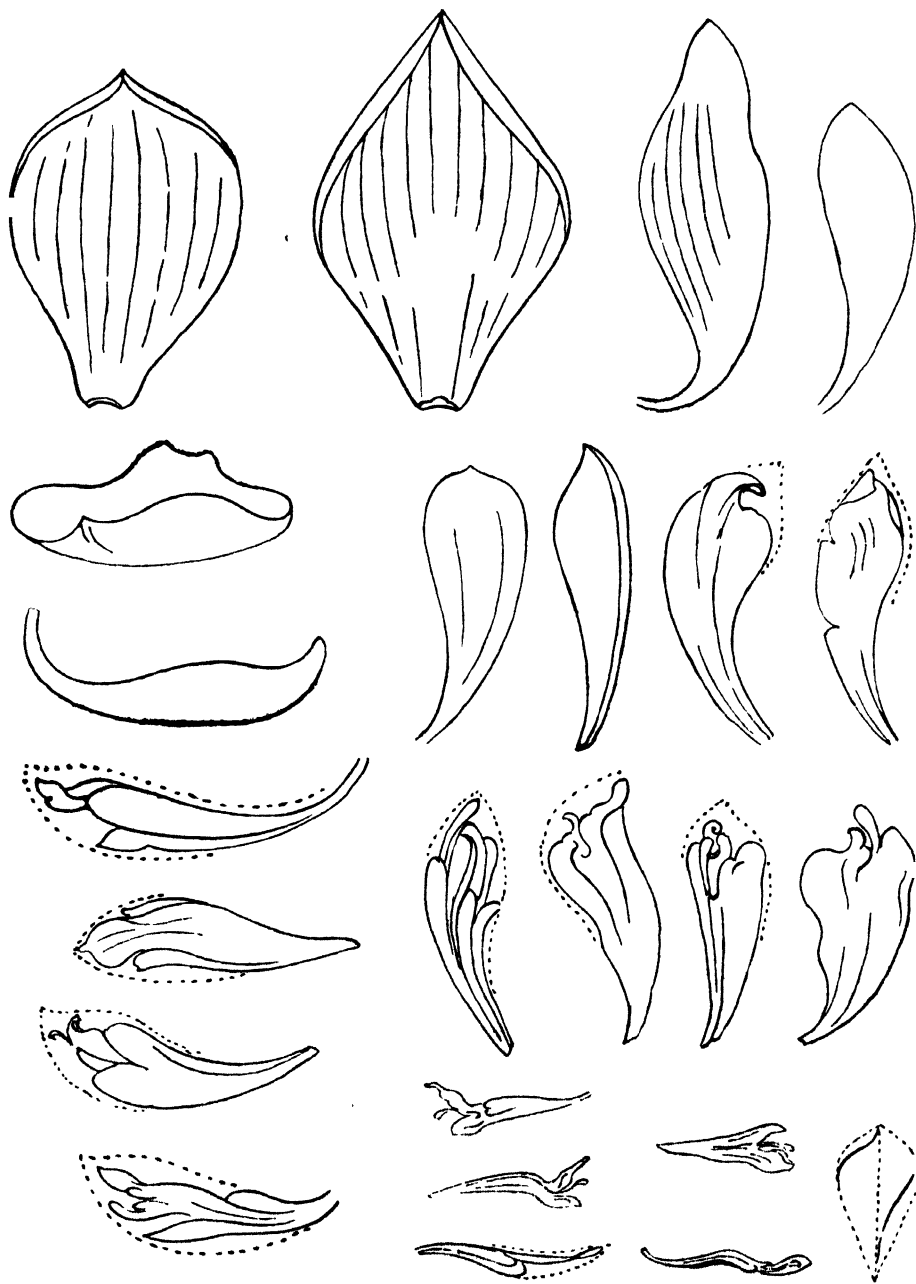
The factors which mainly determine these national preferences are : the flora and the fauna of the country, the temperament of the people, and their religion. As examples, we may mention pomegranate (both fruit and flower) in Persia, dragon and the *botan* in China, chrysanthemum and cherry in Japan, papyrus and lily in Egypt, olive and palm in Greece, grape (leaf and fruit) in Rome, and so on.

In India the lotus has the place of honour in her decorative art, though mango (leaf and fruit), peepul leaf and green coconut have their place. The lotus is found in abundance all over India. The uniform loveliness of its petals, gathering themselves into a fulness of beauty, has probably lured our people to accept the flower as the symbol of our ideal.

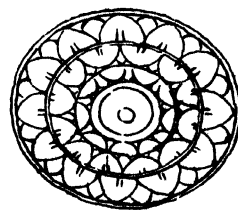
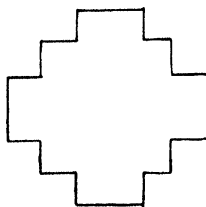
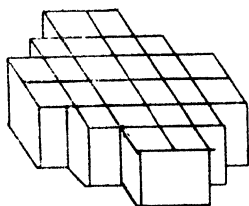
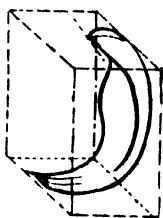
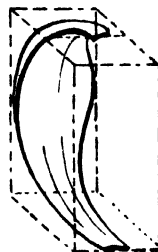
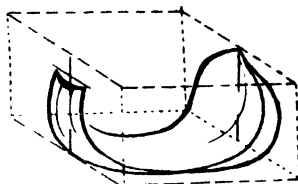
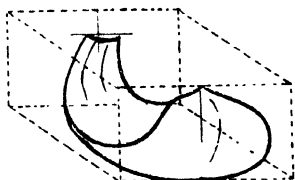
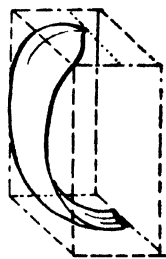
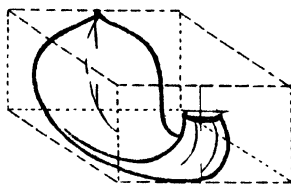
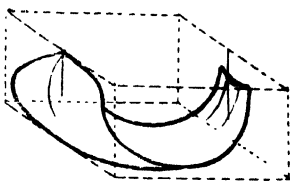
Our decorative art has made use of this flower in a multiplicity of ways : at the feet of our divinities, on altars (of sacrifice and of worship), in social ceremonies, in military formations, and, above all, in providing similitudes for all that is lovely and chaste.

Here I shall attempt to give an idea—based on my own study and observation—of how the form of lotus has insinuated itself in the decorative art of India. These studies should make clear the diverse ways in which the decorative artists studied and made use of this symbol. The form of lotus gets modified according to the materials the artist has to work upon, and hence the remarkable variety of its designs.





Studies of the natural lotus (flower and leaf) by the author.



Studies of the natural lotus (flower and leaf) by the author.



Examples (from Architecture, Sculpture, Relief work, and Painting) of the lotus (flower and leaf) used for different purposes and worked in different materials.

CIVILIZATION IN ANCIENT IRAN

Manilal Patel

I

AS one of the oldest seats of culture, Iran has long taken a place along with Mesopotamia, Elam and Egypt. It is only recently that, thanks to the epoch-making discoveries at Mohen-jo-daro and Harappa, India has also registered her claim to be reckoned as such beside these countries. India's relation to Iran goes back to those periods of prehistoric time when the forefathers of the Vedic Indians and of the Avestan Iranians were still one and the same people, a branch of the Indo-European stock, calling themselves 'Aryas' (Vedic *Ārya*-, Avestan *Airya*-, Mid. Pers. *Ariya*-).¹ The name Iran, which is now to replace 'Persia' as a designation of the country by the state order of the Imperial Government of Teheran,² is derived from *Airyana*, an adjectival form of the Av. *Airya*-. For want of written evidence, we cannot say when exactly the separation between the proto-Indians and the proto-Iranians, culminating in the occupation of their respective homes of the historic period, took place, but it must have occurred at the least more than 3000 years ago.³ Even after the separation, intercourse between the two peoples continued uninterrupted and intimate for a long time.⁴

1. Their language is also termed 'Aryan' in the Inscriptions of Darius (Edward Meyer in the *Encycl. Britt.* 11th ed.—article 'Persia' : *History : Ancient*).—For a possibility of connecting the civilization of Mohen-jo-daro with the chalcolithic culture of the Iranian Highlands, see H. Frankfort in the *Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology*, vol. VII (1932), Introduction, pp. 11 f.

2. *Sunday Statesman*, January 27, and March 17, 1935.

The order has begun to operate from March 21, the Iranian's New Year's Day.—Apart from its being historically more correct, the new change appears to be quite appropriate inasmuch as the inhabitants of the country have always called the land as Iran. 'Persia' comes from Fars, the name of a province in the southwest of Iran, which the Iranians first occupied only after the destruction of the Elamite Kingdom at the hands of the Assyrians in 640 B.C. The name of the province was then transferred to that of the country.—The world was referred to by the Sasanian rulers as consisting of Iran and Aniran (i. e. Iran and Non-Iran).

3. *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I. p. 319.

4. For a convenient summary of the details of this intercourse, see George W. Briggs, *Brief Outline of Indo-Iranian Contacts*, in the *Oriental Studies in Honour of Cursetji Erachji Pavy*, Oxford (1933), pp. 55-60.

We know but little about the aboriginal tribes inhabiting the Iranian plateau before the Aryan waves submerged them.¹ Nor is it possible at present definitely to determine the date, or clearly to trace the line, of the Aryan invasion of Iran.² Little or no information is available of the proto-Iranians of the period antedating 1000 B. C. It was once hoped that the startling find of certain cuneiform tablets at Boghaz-Keui, which Professor Hugo Winckler made known to the literary world in 1907,³ would very much remove our ignorance about the ancient Iranians. However, attempts at explaining as Iranian the four names of the native deities invoked (along with ten Babylonian gods) as witnesses in these Mitannian records (*circa* 1400 B. C.) have proved futile: the deities are decidedly Vedic—Mitra, Varuna, Indra and the Nasatyas. Moreover, among the Hittite archives of Boghaz-Keui is found a document⁴ by an author called Kikkuli, which deals with horse-breeding and contains a series of numerals: *aika* (1), *tera* (3), *panca* (5), *satta*, *sapta* (7), *nava* (9);—and these also seem to bear Indian, rather than Iranian, appearance. Similarly, the theory that some names (e. g. Artassumara, Abhiratha, Aitagama) in the Tel el-Amarna tablets are of the Iranian origin, is now being given up in light of the fact, now established, that “Sanskrit was spoken in the near East in the fifteenth century before our era, and that a Proto-Indian people were once included within the limits of the Hittite Empire”.⁵

The ancient Iranians, then, enter the arena of history in the beginning of the first millennium before Christ. The oldest literary monuments of Iran are the Avestan *Gāthās*, a major portion of which

1. It has been suggested that the representatives of these tribes in historic period might have been the Elamites and Cassites; see L. H. Gray, *Foundations of the Iranian Religions*, Bombay (1930), pp. 10 f.

2. Gray (*op. cit.* p. 11) thinks that the Indo-Iranians advanced into the Iranian Plateau “through the mountain-gaps to the east of the Caspian, just as other waves migrated from the same centre to new homes in the Balto-Slavic lands”,—a theory which he ‘hopes to demonstrate in detail elsewhere’.

3. *Mittheilungen der deutschen Orientgesellschaft*, XXXV, p. 51. Great attention has since been paid to this important discovery; for a partial list of studies thereon, see *CHI*, Vol. I, p. 320, note 2. The list is made more complete by V. Lesny, in *Archiv Orientalni*, Vol. IV, p. 258, n. 2.

4. E. Forrer in the *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, LXXVI, p. 250 ff.; cf. also the studies mentioned by V. Lesny, *ibid.* p. 259, n. 3.

5. A. H. Sayce in the above-mentioned *Pavry Oriental Studies*, p. 402; for a list of other relevant studies, see *ibid.* p. 157, n. 3.

can legitimately claim to be *dicta prophetæ* of Zarathushtra. Of the various theories regarding the date of Zarathushtra, the two that have received the greatest attention are : (i) middle of the seventh century B. C., a date based on the native tradition and on the assumption that Kavi Vishtaspa, the Prophet's patron, is identical with Hystaspes, the father of Darius I ; ¹ and (ii) 1000-900 B. C., first advanced by Ed. Meyer ² and supported in the main by others ³ on the evidence of the Median names, such as *Mazdaka*, occurring in the Assyrian records of the eighth century B. C. Here is not the place to enter into critical examination of the arguments relating to these theories ; suffice it to say that the present writer shares the assumption of those who would place Zarathushtra at a time antedating the eighth century B. C. at least, probably a little before the first appearance of the Medes in Western Iran.

II

For an idea of the state of civilization and religion in pre-Zoroastrian Iran, we have therefore to rely on the information contained in stray passages of the Avestan scriptures. Among the foreign sources supplementing our information, the Vedas render indispensable help inasmuch as they, particularly the earliest hymns of the Rigveda, contain some references reminiscent of the Indo-Iranian, and even of the Indo-European, period. A comparative study of these two literatures enables us to know that pre-Zoroastrian Iran worshipped nature-deities like the Dragon-slayer Verethraghna, Mithra, Apam Napat, Airyaman, Asura, and Vayu. Sacrifices, though simpler in detail, were offered to these deities and *Soma* (Av. *Haoma*) served the purpose of a sacrificial drink and was, perhaps, deified also. ⁴ It is said that Vivanhvat, Athwya, Thritha and Pourushaspa, all of legendary fame, performed the *Hoama* sacrifice and, as a reward, to each of them an illustrious son was born. ⁵ Many of the myths and ideas, alluded to, or often presented in obscure ethical garb in

1. This theory is followed by Gray, Hall, Hertel, Herzfeld, Jackson, Junker, Meillet and others.

2. *Encycl. Britt.*, 11th ed., art. 'Persia'.

3. Such as Bartholomæe, Charpentier, Christensen, Clemen, Geldner, Keith, Lommel, Markwart, Reichelt and v. Wesendonk.

4. *Haoma* is not mentioned by name in the *Gathas*, but by its well-known epithet *duraosha* "keeping death away", in Ys. XXXII, 14.

5. Ys. IX, 4 ; 7 ; 10 ; 13.

the Younger Avesta, appear to be remnants of the pre-Avestan cults. Thus, for example, the conception of *Fravashis*,¹ "guardian-spirits", had its origin in all probability in some primitive, ancient faith of the Iranian. Some of these myths, e.g. Yima and his *vara*, the dragon-fight between the valiant Thraetaona and Azi Dahaka, can be traced back to the Indo-European period. The same thing may also be said of the belief in *Asha*,² the 'Divine Order', governing the world. To all intents and purposes, life was in a nomadic stage; sanctity of the cow was scrupulously believed in, and, perhaps, so also of the dog. Religion, in short, was hedged round with ritualism, and therefore, naturally, the fire and the fire-priest played an important part in the daily life of the ancient Iranian.

III

It was on the background of this primitive and nomadic civilization and polytheistic religion that Zarathushtra, one of the earliest and greatest saviours of humanity, commenced his religious reform. It was no easy task that he set himself to tackle; the opposition of his sacerdotal adversaries was at times overwhelming, and his own material resources being scant, success was slow in attending his message and mission.³ And yet with his indomitable will and supreme faith in the sacredness of his prophetic mission, Zarathushtra emancipated Iran from tribal, polytheistic nature-creeds and gave the world, for the first time in the history of human civilization, the noblest conception of one God, the omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient Ahura Mazda.⁴

The religious and moral teachings of Zarathushtra may be summarized in a few lines. There are, for the time being, two principles in the world, operating against each other: the Good and the Evil. Ahura Mazda, the "Wise Lord", is ever opposed to Angra Manyu, the "Evil Spirit". Certain powers, in a way attributes or 'aspects' of the

1. Read as *Fravurti*—by Andreas and his followers.

2. Also read as *Urtom* by the above-mentioned scholars; Ved. *Rta*, 'truth' 'unalterable law'.

3. In the *Zat-sparam* 23,2 the prophet is made to say to Ahura Mazda: "In ten years only one man has been converted by me." Cf. also Zarathushtra's own lament in *Ys.* XLVI, 1 f.

4. Rabindranath Tagore: "Zarathushtra was the first prophet who emancipated religion from the exclusive narrowness of the tribal God, the God of a chosen people, and offered it to the universal man". *Introduction* (p. 8) to *The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra* by D. J. Irani, London, 1934.

Supreme Being, help the Wise Lord to counteract the deceitful play of the Evil Spirit. In this battle between the good and the evil none can remain neutral: man has to make a definite choice himself and play his part and face for all eternity abiding consequences resulting from the choice. There is no doubt that the forces of Evil will be decisively vanquished at a definite point of the struggle and that Good will triumph and reign supreme in the end. The prophet therefore exhorts mankind: "None of you shall listen to the doctrine and precepts of the followers of the Evil."¹ It is then clear that man's choice should be willingly to assist God against the Evil Spirit; and to assist Ahura Mazda is, according to Zarathushtra, to lead a life conditioned, not by external practices of sacrificial rites, but by the noble triad of *humatem*, *hukthem*, *hvarshtem* (good thought, good word, good deed).²

The spiritual upheaval brought forth by the religious reform of Zarathushtra made Iran a significant factor in the evolution of world-culture and world-civilization. Every phase of the Iranian life bore the impress of the lofty, monotheistic faith of Ahura Mazda, and wild, restless, wandering nomads were transformed into settled, virtuous, refined agriculturists performing "a purified worship, shorn of the blood sacrifices which still soiled the altars of every Aryan people".³ And although the original form of the Zoroastrian religion had, during the centuries that followed the passing away of the prophet, to be modified under the pressure of popular cults and credulities, the religion itself grew in vitality ever more with the lapse of time, spreading its wings of influence over Northern India, Cappadocia, Commagene, Pontus, Armenia, Georgia and the Caucasian Highlands. Whether Judaism of the Exile was also influenced by the Iranian religion or not, Professor Gray informs us: "There are some traces of Iranian beliefs in post-Apostolic Christianity, as in Muhammadanism, Gnosticism, Mandaeanism, and especially Manicheism with its ramifications in Europe to the days of Albigenses, while under the name of Mithraism they swept the Roman Empire,

1. Ys. XXXI, 18.

2. Ys. XIX, 45 and 47.

3. S. Levi, in the *Revue de Paris*, 15th Feb. 1925, p. 801; quoted by Henri Berr in his *Foreword* (p. XVI) to *Ancient Persia and Iranian Civilisation* by Clement Huart, London, 1927.

stopping only at Hadrian's Wall and constituting by all odds the most formidable rival of nascent Christianity."¹

IV

From nomadism to a community, from community to a powerful nation: such is the story of the progress of the Iranian under the Zoroastrian religion. This progress culminated in the creation of vast empires such as the Achaemenian and the Sasanian. In the making of these empires, the contribution of the religion was as important as was the part played by these empires in helping the religion to spread so far. Darius I, whom Darmesteter rightly called "administrator of genius", is an instance in point. In the Behistun inscription, which reveals indeed the dignity and spiritual bent of mind of Darius, he expressly ascribes the cause of his conquests to Ahura Mazda.² This great emperor organised his empire, the first of its vastness in history, in such an enlightened way that internecine warfare and brigandage were rooted out, and peace and prosperity and justice ruled in all the lands from the Aegean to the Indus. Great arterial roads were built across the vast empire and the state took great precautions to ensure safe travelling. It was due to this "Persian Peace" in the sixth and fifth century B. C. that not only trade but intellectual intercourse also was possible *for the first time* between the Ancient East on the one hand and Greece and Rome on the other, that scientific and religious knowledge of the former could reach the latter without any let or hindrance. And it is certain that Darius inspired both Alexander the Great and Ashoka, the former in establishing a vast Macedonian empire, and the latter in taking a deep interest in the prosperity of his peoples and in addressing them and posterity through rock-inscriptions.

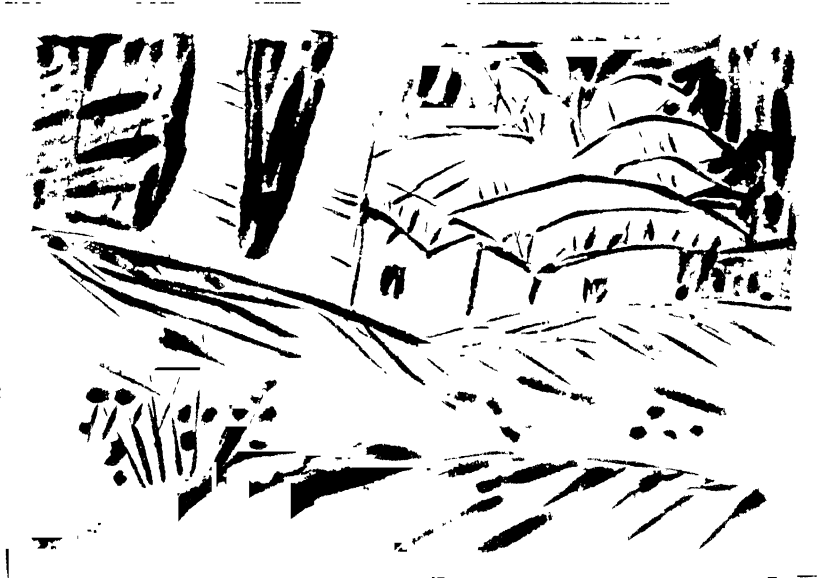
Under the fostering care of the Achaemenian empire, both science and art flourished, though the inspiration for the same seems to be foreign in its origin. Assimilating the foreign elements, the Iranian art developed its own special characteristics found in the huge size of the buildings at Persepolis and Susa, and in the brilliance and harmony of colour. We are told that it affected the Arabs, and through them, the Western art of the Middle Ages.³

1. *Ibid.* pp. 1-2, Where previous Studies bearing on this problem have been cited in footnotes.

2. Col. I, lines 12, 24-26.

3. Henri Berr, *ibid.* p. xiv.

The final curtain over this glorious political Iran fell with the fall of the last Zoroastrian empire, thirteen centuries ago. And yet those who have seen the country assert that the soul of Ancient Iran is not dead. Even the Islam had to modify itself, after it entered Iran, in terms of the Iranian attitude toward life and world. Because of its peculiar position, Iran was predestined, as it were, to become an intermediary link between the East and the West in the past. Its contribution to the wealth of human civilization was, therefore, both real and remarkable.



AN EVENING WITH 'A. E.'

C. F. Andrews

IT had been one of the great longings of my life to meet George Russell, the Dublin Poet, who had taken the initials 'A. E.' for the *nom-de-plume* by which he was known all over the world. Not only had I greatly admired him for his poetry, (which had, in a very strange manner, the touch of the East in almost every line), but also for his magnificent idealism in the political sphere and his power of transferring this idealism into action.

Perhaps the greatest inspiration to me, from anything he had written, came from his book, called "The National Being". I remember quite well running to Gurudeva with this treasure, immediately after reading it, and how Gurudeva himself read it through eagerly at one sitting and ordered copies of it for the higher class-work in Visva-Bharati.

Fortunately, during a short stay in London, at the beginning of this year, I found out that George Russell was living near at hand. Mrs. Alexander Whyte, with whom I was staying, knew him well. We had a mutual friend, Dr. Hector Munro, a Highlander, who had the same Celtic temperament as George Russell. Both of them came to Mrs. Whyte's house and we spent a rare evening together. He sat back in a comfortable chair and told us story after story with his own inimitable Irish humour. We were able, between us, to get him to go on talking that evening, hour after hour, and it was evidently an intense relief to him to do so, since he had been somewhat lonely in the rooms where he had settled down in London for the winter. Mrs. Whyte had not invited any other guests, so we were alone together,—he seemed to become at once at home with me because of my knowledge and love of the East, which he shared to the full.

For Rabindranath Tagore himself, he had a very deep affection, which had reverence at its base. He admired him, not only as a poet, but as a man ; and while he sought from me information about the poet he also gave me lavishly his own ideas in return. He seemed to know Tagore's prose-poems almost by heart and referred to them again and again. *Gitanjali* was the book he loved best. Among the prose works of Tagore he told me that *Sadhana* had been of

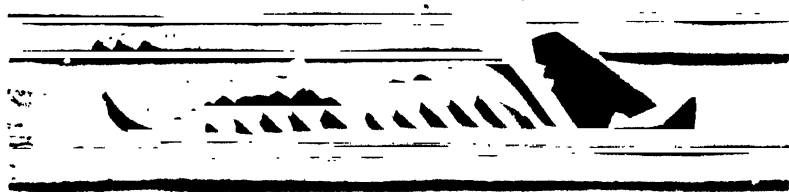
the greatest help to him and had made its deep impression on him because it was the first book to explain to him quite clearly the outline of the philosophy of the East, which he longed so much to understand.

While he talked, he kept on using the common words that were employed in Indian philosophy. He had very little idea how they were pronounced, but he had a remarkable grasp of their inner meaning.

He was very deeply interested, when I told him how the poet had found delight in painting pictures from his own imagination during the leisure hours of his old age. George Russell himself was an artist and he told me that the joy of creating a picture was as great as that of producing a poem. The same creative faculty was present in each. I told him how the poet Tagore had a third gift, namely, the creative power of producing beautiful *music* for his poems. "Ah," he said to me, "that's the way all great poetry should be written. The true poet is the bard."

Looking back on that evening, the strongest impression of all that is left to me is that of a great and noble personality who had retained the heart of a child in his old age.

As he lay back in that easy chair talking, with humour sparkling in his eyes, he gave me an insight into his humanity which was rich in its vast store of imaginative beauty. He had lived his life as a poet to the full and his deeds had always been equal to his words.





By Sutan Harhi

A STRANGE PARADOX

K. R. Kripalani

IT is a strange paradox that the most selfless man of the age should be so sadly obsessed with "human egoism" as to assert that Nature's convulsions wait on men's frailties. In a recent issue of the *Harijan*, in answer to a correspondent who had asked: "At the time of the Bihar earthquake, you had no hesitation in saying that it was to be taken by Savarna Hindus as a fit punishment for the sin of untouchability. For what sin must the more terrible 'quake of Quetta be?", Gandhiji wrote: "If I had known Quetta, as I know Bihar and the Biharis, I would certainly have mentioned the sins of Quetta, though they might be no more its specialities than untouchability was Bihar's. But we all—the rulers and the ruled—know that we have many sins, personal and national, to answer for. The call is to all these to repentance, prayer and humiliation."

To emphasise that both the rulers and the ruled of this unhappy land have many sins to answer for may be very pertinent, but to imply that the earthquakes were provoked by them is a form of intellectual indulgence which should scandalise anybody's common sense, were we not used for ages to this ancient habit of the prophets to explain in detail the ways and motives of what they never cease to exalt as the Inscrutable. Not every prophet is a Buddha to believe that silence is the best answer to most human queries concerning the Divine. In vain did Rabindranath protest, at the time of the Bihar-earthquake controversy, that the motives of God should not be dragged into explaining the working of Nature's phenomena. Nature has its laws which are accessible to the enquiry of the scientist, while the Divine is a conception, at once transcending and transforming our moral biases, and useful mainly for releasing us from our earthly egoisms. But the poet's protest, along with the philosopher's logic, were of little avail against "the inner voice" that kept on insisting: this is so.

There is, no doubt, some truth in Gandhiji's assertion—an assertion which has been the main theme of some of Rabindranath's finest utterances—that science cannot explain everything about the workings of the universe. Science can only explain how the earth quakes and how men perish, but it cannot tell why so much human suffering should be inevitable. If A stabs B, a scientist, watching from a distance, may

be able to analyse, in purely physical terms, how passion seized the brain of the assassin, how his will was provoked, how his muscles moved, how the gaping wound was dug in, but something more than that is needed to satisfy our human interest in the act. We should like to know why A should want to murder B ; for an explanation of which we should have to study the psychic relationship between the two. Even so, without postulating a conscious will behind the happenings of Nature, one may still wonder—specially one who carries an infallible assurance of the validity of the human soul—if there is not some other relationship, subtler than the purely physical, between human destiny and the workings of Nature. The act of wondering is not in itself unscientific ; if at all, it is much less unscientific than the fanatic assertion that the physical explanation of a phenomenon exhausts all the truth of it. What is unscientific in Gandhiji's statement is his cocksureness that there *is* a moral law controlling the physical laws, that *he* has mastered the elusiveness of that law, and that *this* is an instance of the law.

We need not, however, protest too much that Gandhiji is not logical and scientific. He is one of those rare beings who are great enough without being logical and scientific. Indeed, the greatest charge we can bring against him amounts to no more than this that he is not greater than most great prophets and redeemers of mankind who have preceded him. But there is, nevertheless, an unhappy significance in Gandhiji's statements regarding the Bihar-and Quetta-earthquakes which raises issues far beyond the purely logical. It is not a mere matter of aggressive intuitiveness. Such aggressive intuitiveness should be harmless in other mystics. But in Gandhiji it is particularly unfortunate in as much as it contradicts the moral significance of his historic role in the political life of the world. Gandhiji has always called upon men to do the right because it is right, even though immediate victory lay by different means. He has exhorted men neither to be coerced by fear, nor to be lured by wrong, into doing what is not dictated by their moral sense, the mainspring of which should be love. In other words, he asks men to be moral and not "political". That has been, and will remain, the abiding value of his personality to this morally-harassed century. When he asked us to revolt against "untouchability", not because it is not sanctioned by our religion, but because it violates our sense of moral justice and human dignity, we hailed him as our best prophet. But when he frightens us into a dread of our "sins" lest God's thunderbolt descend on us, we stand aghast.

at the spectacle of a prophet crumbling into a priest. For it is the old old trick of the priest to frighten men into "virtue".

It is not therefore the lack of logic in the earthquake statements that dismays us but the lack of Gandhi in it. The priest in him we refuse to recognise. It is Gandhi who has quickened our sense of what is wrong, who has taught us to defy mere power, even when it seems omnipotent, who has inspired us to trust in love even when it seems so impotent, that we shall continue to cherish as the true prophet of the age.



THE IDOL GRINS

^r EVEN to the intellectual,
Entranced in the sacred actual,
A moment happens when the idol grins,
When the real retires,
And Love conspires
To fling its falsehood about :
And the warning shout
Of the sobered sense
Seems such an impertinence.

K. K.



REVIEWS

The Power Of Non-Violence :

by Richard B. Gregg. (Published by
J. B. Lippincott Company.)

THE book under review has frankly been written to explain, as well as to examine critically, the method of non-violent non-cooperation pursued in the freedom-movement of India under Mahatma Gandhi.

In the first seven chapters of the book, the author compares the institution of war with non-violent non-cooperation in the matter of settling human disputes. According to the author, war has certain fine features about it. But in its total effect, its results are always poor in proportion to the human wastage involved in it. Historical instances are also cited to prove that when non-violence is practised in the right spirit it not only succeeds in settling a particular conflict of interests, but also leaves both the parties involved in a happier and nobler frame of mind at the conclusion of hostilities.

In a true non-violent fight, the fighter is not a passive agent ; as a matter of fact, he is the more militant of the two parties concerned. It is he who forces the issue by refusing to serve under a particular institution. He makes the latter unworkable and subjects it to a thorough examination. His aim is to draw the attention of its champions to the injustices involved within it ; and then to gain their co-operation in building up a new institution or a new synthesis of interests. But in this task of non-coöperation, the truly non-violent man refuses to hate the persons against whose institution or established habits he is fighting. He distinguishes between the latter and the personality of his opponent. He resists the institutions, and draws upon himself all the suffering that his opponents may shower upon him. But he resolutely refuses to inflict suffering upon the person of his opponents. According to the author, this involved respect for the personality of one's opponent succeeds in breaking through their obduracy, and they become a willing partner in finding a substitute for the existing institution which may be to the satisfaction of all parties concerned.

This being so, our author believes that non-violent non-cooperation is not only a good substitute for war, but one which is infinitely

superior to it. It ennobles the human race by its insistence upon the essential oneness of mankind. It also involves much less total suffering for mankind ; for, in this case, only one party in a conflict suffers and not the other.

The second part of the book, consisting of three chapters, is devoted to a consideration of specific political questions in relation to the method of non-violence. It discusses how non-violence may be practised by the subjects of a State against the State itself as well as by the State against its subjects ; how the class-war might be solved by non-violence, and so on. Although such important questions are dealt with here, yet to the average reader in India, some of the arguments may seem like special pleadings on behalf of non-violence meant expressly to set the mind of the western reader at rest. The very basis of the State is violence ; so it can hardly practise non-violence against its subjects. Moreover, when non-violence is carried to its logical extremity, it results in a state of philosophical anarchy, which means the end of involuntary social institutions like the State. This aspect of non-violence does not seem to have received adequate treatment from the author. Chapters XI. and XII., which are practically an appendage to the second part, share in the general weakness of construction. They are devoted to some special arguments as to why non-violence is more conducive to human progress than war.

The third and last part of the book, consisting of the next four chapters, is of a practical nature. It clearly sets forth the discipline which is necessary for carrying out a campaign of non-violent non-cooperation successfully. It tells us how a continued and energetic reformation of our personal and social habits is required before this new method can be practised successfully. It lays down some of the rules of this discipline, and will therefore prove helpful to those who are interested in the practice of non-violence.

We are sure the average reader, who knows so little about the real significance of non-violence, will derive much benefit from reading the book. It will clear up many current misconceptions and also stimulate him to read and think more deeply about the subject.

Nirmal Kumar Bose

The Holy Koran

English translation and commentary, with Arabic text, by A. Yusuf Ali,
Part I. (Published by Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, Kashmiri
Bazar, Lahore ; Price R. 1, or 1s. 6d.)

‘ABDULLAH YUSUF ‘ALI’S English version of the first chapter (sipara) of the Koran is undoubtedly an improvement on its predecessors, in as much as it succeeds in reproducing some at least of the original elegance of the Koran. The Koran, claim Muslim scholars, commands a literary position of supernatural excellence. It was indeed the rhythm and the lofty style of the Book that made the Arabs—a race of poets and thundering orators—believe in the claim of its divine origin. And such a book, strange as it may sound, had so far been translated into European tongues by Christian scholars who regarded its oratory as its most serious defect, which they did their best to expose in their translations. The Koran had so long been in need of a translator who could bring out, to an appreciable extent, its literary elegance and rhythm in English. ‘Abdullah Yusaf ‘Ali is to be congratulated on having attempted it with success. But, as for the ‘Allama’s attempt “to make English itself an Islamic language”, I can only offer my sympathies and hope that it might be possible. One peculiarity of this English version is that each chapter has a prologue—summary and an explanatory introduction in free verse—which creates an atmosphere and gives a general understanding of the contents that are to follow. This prologue in free verse would be much appreciated by the readers.

The English is the language of a Christian race. The English translations of the Koran, done mostly by Christian missionaries, have been, as is natural, greatly biased and done almost as if to discredit the Book.

“What Bibliander published for a Latin translation of that book,” writes G. Sale, “deserves not the name of a translation ; the unaccountable liberties therein taken, and the numberless faults, both of omission and commission, leaving scarce any resemblance of the original . . . ”; and yet this was taken up as the basis by A. Arrivabene for his own Latin version of the Koran. Basing his version on such a faithless origin, this translator declared it to have been done “immediately from the Arabic”. “Wherefore,” says G. Sale, “it is no wonder if the transcript be yet more faulty and absurd than the copy” (*The Koran*, pp. vi, vii).

Andrew du Pryer translated the Koran into French. G. Sale's opinion about his translation is that it is "far from being a just translation ; there being mistakes in every page, besides frequent transpositions, omissions and additions, faults unpardonable in a work of this nature" (p. vii). And yet this was the version on which Alexander Ross based his English translation of the Koran. A. Mingana declares it to be an "extremely bad one" (Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, vol. X, p. 550), to say the least of it. Now, A. Ross "being utterly unacquainted with Arabic, and no great master of the French," what havoc he must have created can easily be imagined. He "has added a number of fresh mistakes of his own to those of Du Pryer ; not to mention the meanness of his language, which would make a better book ridiculous" (The Koran, G. Sale, p. vii).

Father Lewis Maracci, confessor to Pope Innocent XI., translated the holy Book to discredit Islam, and, to quote Sawary's opinion, (quoted in Sale,) " has not expressed the ideas of Koran but travestied the words of it into barbarous Latin" (The Koran, p. viii).

On this very "barbarous Latin" G. Sale himself was pleased to found his own English version, with no other purpose than to "un-deceive those who, from the ignorant or unfair translations . . . have entertained too favourable an opinion of the original, and also to enable us effectively to expose the imposture" (The Koran, p. v.). Regarding Sale's translation and the tangled English in which he has presented the Koran, J. M. Rodwell remarks, "Sale has, however, followed Maracci too closely, especially in introducing his paraphrastic comments into the body of the text . . ." (The Koran, 1876, p. xxiv). Like A. Ross, though perhaps not to the same extent, Sale has not been honest enough to admit his version to have been totally based on Maracci's Latin work. Though he has admitted his indebtedness to Maracci, in his Preliminary Discourse, yet, as Sir E. Denison Ross has pointed out, "it does not go far enough. A comparison of the two versions shows that so much had been achieved by Maracci that Sale's work might almost have been performed with a knowledge of Latin alone, as far as regards the quotations from Arabic authors" (The Koran, Introduction p. ix). This apparently leads to a very serious charge of dishonesty against G. Sale. "I do not wish to imply," continues Sir E. Denison Ross, "that Sale did not know Arabic, but I do maintain that his work as it stands gives a misleading estimate of his original researches, and that his tribute to Maracci falls far short of his actual indebtedness" (The Koran, p. ix). What strengthens

this charge still more is the fact that Sale had with him few Arabic works of first-rate importance while translating the Koran. What is significant," writes Sir E. Denison Ross, "is the fact that it (that is, the list of works that Sale possessed,) contains hardly any of the Arabic works and *none* of the commentaries which are referred to on every page of Sale's translation of the Koran" (p. xiii).

The necessity for the followers of Islam was clear, that they should translate the Koran themselves if the English-speaking people must have an honest and correct rendering of it.

Of the English translations that Muslims have produced, 'A. Yusuf 'Ali's has the merit that it reflects the literary side of the Revelations too. I am afraid this version would not satisfy a philologist who would prefer an underlinear translation, word for word, without any regard to the syntax of the language it is translated in. Nor would a polemist or a scholiast be quite pleased with the commentary that rather aims at the elucidation of the sense in the text than dwells on the points of departure and theological dissensions bearing on the text. Its principal beauty is its rhythmic English, with verses properly distinguished, that give a reflection of the original Arabic style. This version follows the generally accepted significance of the text, except perhaps, in the commentary, where the translator is a little too sure of the symbolic nature of Hell and Heaven as also that of Satan, the evil one.

M. Ziauddin

The Examination Tangle and the Way Out:

Report of the International Commission on Examinations of the New Education Fellowship, 1935. New Education Fellowship,
29, Tavistock Square, London.

PROGRESSIVE educators all over the world are confronted with the problem of the existing system of examinations. Bismarck spoke about them in the following terms: "We are being destroyed by our examinations. Most of them who pass are so mentally exhausted that they are incapable of any initiative of their own, take a negative attitude to everything and, worst of all, have a great opinion of themselves because of their success."

Bergson, the great modern philosopher, distinguishes between the intelligence which understands, discusses and accepts or rejects and the intelligence which invents. He says that written examinations are particularly adapted to the reactive, as against the spontaneous or

inventive intelligence. Another great educator Dr. Hilla speaks of examinations, saying that they test only "the reaction to a definite set task, not initiative which searches and defines its own problems."

Sir Philip Hartog in his book *Examinations And Their Relation To Culture And Efficiency* expresses a similar view when he says that "Examinations which started as tests of efficiency have not been called in to test culture. But this is precisely what they cannot do, although they can easily be brought to kill it. For 'culture is that part of education which is meaningless unless it is sensitive and individual.' "

The New Education Fellowship, a world-wide educational movement of progressive thought, appointed an International Commission on examinations which after working for more than six years has brought out a very valuable document on the subject and put forth concrete proposals, with a request that they be discussed by all Sections and Groups of the Head Quarters in London.

The Commission's report is summarised in the following words : "As long as External Examinations are used as the chief means of evaluating schools and the pupils in them, they will lead to a deplorable over-emphasis upon the more External and easily examined parts of the curriculum, together with a neglect of these less easily assessed, and an ignoring of creative and social activities and gifts, besides tending to stereotype curriculum and methods.

"The present examination system is a handicap to the normal progress and development of education throughout the world."

The commission has offered their opinions and suggestions in regard to the mischief of External Examinations and how they can be replaced by Internal Examinations.

The Report is one of the valuable documents of our age on the subject and should be in the hands of every teacher in progressive Schools.

P.C. Lal

Bharat-itya-Chitrakala :

By Nanalal Chamanlal Mehta. Published by Hindustani Academy, Allahabad.

THE author is a well-known writer. He is to be congratulated, even apart from the merit of the book, on having written the first history of Indian painting in Hindi. One must acknowledge with

regret that no such book has yet appeared in Bengali—indeed, as far as I know, in any other Indian language.

The most interesting as well as the most instructive chapter is the first, in which the author discusses the sources of the literature about the Indian Painting. His comparative estimate of the Indian perspective and the western perspective deserves to be noticed. The succeeding chapters, though claiming to trace the evolution of Indian Painting, are mainly a panegyric of the Moghul style of painting. We have no wish to quarrel with the talented author over his admiration of the Moghul style, but we cannot help noticing that he has entirely overlooked the influence of the western art on the Moghul art in India, specially in its evolution in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The book contains several coloured reproductions which, the author acknowledges, do little justice to the originals. That is, however, a matter of the poor standard of Indian printing.

Benode Mukherjee

A Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons

(Bkah-hgyur and Bstan-hgyur),

edited by Prof. Hakuju Ui, Prof. Munetada Suzuki, Prof. Yensho

Kanakura, and Lect. Tokan Tada, published by Tohoku

Imperial University, aided by Saito Gratitude

Foundation, Sendai, Japan, 1934.

Two Parts, pp. 701 and 124 respectively.

THOUGH there are indigenous Catalogues (*Dkar-chags*) to be found at the end of the two great collections of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons, *Bkah-hgyur* and *Bstan-hgyur*, popularly known as *Kanjur* and *Tanjur* respectively, and considerable improvement on them is made by those written in European languages (French and German) mainly by Cordier and Beckh, scholars were still keenly feeling the want of a new catalogue with indexes that could easily and adequately serve the purpose of a scholar. There was no complete index of works and authors with special reference to the *Bstan-hgyur*. Thus a catalogue meeting all these requirements was long a desideratum and thanks to the learned editors and the Tohoku Imperial University, Sendai, Japan, under the able guidance of its president, Mr. K. Honda, we have now got it supplied in two parts. Part I is the complete catalogue of the two collections, *Kanjur* and *Tanjur*, prepared according to their Derge (*Sde. dge*, a remote eastern district of Tibet) edition which is considered to be the

best of all editions. It contains with full references the names of the works in Tibetan in Tibetan script with Roman transliteration, their Sanskrit and Chinese names, where available ; the former in Roman and the latter in Chinese letters (Chinese names being gathered from catalogues of Nanjio and others), and also the names of authors, translators, revisers, as well as in many cases the names of places where the translations were made. The second part is the full index of all the names in part I.

The work is so useful that no scholar interested in Tibetan studies can do without it. By publishing it the Tohoku Imperial University has really done a great work. The get-up is also very good.

Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful for the following publications received :

- (1) Bengal Public Health Report—for the year 1933 (Government of Bengal).
- (2) Some usefull pamphlets from The Bengal Publicity Board.
- (3) Our Trip to America—K. Natarajan (The Indian Social Reformer, Bombay).
- (4) Speeches and Writings of Sachchidananda Sinha (Ram Narain-Lal, Allahabad).
- (5) Bharat-iya-Chitrakala—Nanlal Mehta (Hindustani Academy, Allahabad).
- (6) The Karnatak Historical Review (Jan. 1933).
- (7) Contemporary India (Vol. I. No. 2).
- (8) The Reform of Muslim Society—Prince Said Halim Pasha (The Anjuman-i-Khuddam-ud-Din, Lahore).
- (9) The Harijan (weekly).
- (10) The Servants of India (weekly).
- (11) The Rajkumar College Magazine.

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Bunder Road, Karachi (INDIA).**

The Visva-Bharati Quarterly

Vol. I, Part III, New Series.

Nov.—Jan., 1935—36.

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Where the mind is without fear
and the head is held high,
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken
up into fragments by narrow domestic
walls;

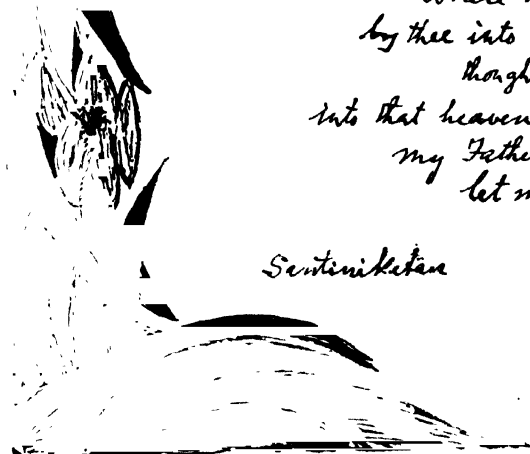
Where words come out from the
depth of truth;
Where tireless striving
stretches its arms towards
perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason
has not lost its way into the
dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward
by thee into ever-widening
thought and action —

into that heaven of freedom,
my Father,
let my country awake.

Santiniketan

Rabindranath Tagore



THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

November

New Series, Vol. I. Part III.

1935

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Rabindranath Tagore

THE difficulty which exists in the minds of most men in connection with the religious teaching of the young seems to be that, while they have a traditional belief in religion as being a desirable thing, the desire for it has not become true in their own every-day life. So they feel the want of it, but they want it cheap. They wish to spend on it no more effort than the surplus left over after all other requirements have been secured.

There are many cheap things in the world, which may be procured with the minimum amount of trouble. But if any one comes and asks how to get a thing of price for nothing, the suspicion is forced on me that he is seeking to be instructed in the art of forgery, or in that of shop-lifting. I cannot suppose that he does not know the high road along which the legitimate commerce of the world finds its way : I have to conclude that he is unwilling to spare the time, or undergo the trouble, required to traverse it.

There are circumstances in which the imbibing of religion should be as easy for children as taking breath. But this very taking of breath may be put beyond the doctor's aid by the slightest of obstructions. In fact, if the patient is conscious of an effort in breathing, that itself is a bad sign. It is the same with religion. When spiritual feeling permeates a community, then the religious life is spontaneous ; it naturally finds its creative activity and moral expression. The problem of the religious education of children does not then separately arise, because their subconscious mind grows in an atmosphere rich with the sense of divine presence.

From the dimmest period of his history man had a feeling, however vague, that the apparent facts of existence were not final ;

that his supreme welfare depended upon his being able to remain in perfect relationship with some great mystery behind the veil. In the depths of his consciousness, man has ever carried the conviction that he is on the threshold of a new life, that his being is to be liberated from nature's womb into a realm of mystic existence which is still unknown to him. As this to him was always a supreme fact, of far higher importance than merely to carry on his physical life in the material world apparent to the senses, he submitted himself to special education at the hands of those whom he considered to be wise.

These wise men were given special privileges and protection. They were released from the duties of bartering and warfare. They had the leisure to train their minds for the pursuit of knowledge. They became the teachers of the community. Under their influence, all departments of knowledge came to be grouped round religion as a centre. This state of things remained possible, so long as the sphere of knowledge was circumscribed, the seekers after knowledge few, and the groups to which the teachers belonged narrow.

But in the West, conditions changed with comparative rapidity. With the progress of material conditions, the desire, opportunity and facility for learning, all became wider. Knowledge ramified in countless directions and its accumulated burden grew heavy. Eventually, each department of knowledge, conscious of its own mature strength, sought independence, and at last education shook off its allegiance to religion.

One other reason of this severance of ties between religion and education was the fact that religion, whose obvious realm was the spiritual world, and which had cultivated a mental attitude fit for its own subject, claimed to extend its power of divination over the domain of physical nature. It loaded itself with creeds and dogmas, which not only obstructed the path of natural truth but also of moral progress. It was cumbered with legends that ignored all evidences of history and teachings of science. It assumed infallibility and divine inspiration even in matters which have their ultimate reality in universal physical law. Till at last, the rational mind of man was driven, for the sake of its own safety and of the dignity of truth, to assert its right in its own domain.

The mother's womb is not a final world for the child : it even becomes an evil if, when the child is mature for liberation, it still persists in trying to keep its charge enveloped within its shelter. But, at the same time, the relationship of the mother's love ought to be

more real and strong after the child is born into the outer world. Only in lower creatures is this bond of love snapped almost immediately after birth.

The same truth holds good in man's education, which has to be delivered from the physical envelopment of religion. But if the spiritual bond, which such emancipation should bring with it, does not grow stronger and become more subtly overspread, then it becomes a great calamity for the orphaned spirit. And so, education in the West, while still arrogantly proud of its liberation from religion, is occasionally becoming conscious of an emptiness which mere knowledge cannot fill.

Our educated communities in India, at the present time, are faced with the same problems which beset the peoples of Europe. Our intellect and our will are forcibly attracted outwards, and our soul is left dormant in a world of emptiness. Owing to our absorption in the external, we have not even the time to realise the gaping disproportion between our inner and outer life. Such religious activity as still remains to us represents the inertia of habit; it continues because we ignore it by our conformity which is too lethargic to question itself.

Meanwhile our present secular education is busy plying the axe at the root of orthodox beliefs. In our sacred books, as well as in those of Europe, we have medieval theories of creation and antiquated views about history and geography. These are so mixed up with the doings of the gods and goddesses, that no amount of special pleading will serve to keep them apart. Whenever the modern pandit tries to bring science to his aid for justifying his sacred *Shastras*, he only confirms the difficulties he sets out to remove. For when once science is called in, as an arbiter, the methods of empty advocacy can no longer prevail.

To say that the *Varaha Avatar* was not a real boar at all, but simply a symbolic way of accounting for earthquakes, is only a polite way of showing the door to the *puranic* myth. Not only in the case of the *puranic* stories, but also in that of *shastric* injunctions and social practices, adjustment to modern knowledge and experience becomes impossible. It is hopeless to bring science, history or modern business requirements, within the old scriptural pale. In these circumstances, there cannot but ensue, in India as in Europe, a fight to the finish between modern secular teaching and orthodox religious teaching. Indeed, whether we are conscious of it or not, such a struggle is already in progress in our country.

It is possible for the orthodox to stand outside the conflict altogether. If they do not object to blind belief, or loose thinking, if, in their view, a strenuous endeavour to apprehend the truth is not an essential requisite in the formation of human character, they need not face the problem at all. But, in the case of us unorthodox moderns, who are as much Hindus as the most ancient of them, and at the same time have acquired a scientific culture in which we believe, the question acutely presents itself : "How are we to give the mind of our children a definite religious direction ?"

It is not enough that it should rain ; there must be a reservoir to store the water, and channels for its proper distribution, if it has to be fully utilised. Similarly, the preaching of spiritual truth may soften the mind for the time, but the effect will only be fleeting ; and when the mid-day waxes hot, or the house is on fire, spiritual comfort will not be available. Moreover, the mind also is fluid like water, and merely one-sided support cannot hold it up. But have we moderns the equipment for constructing an all-round support ? For, however much we may bewail the fact that the character of our children is getting lax and cannot find shelter in any ideal, our modern education forbids us to revert to the still worse disease of orthodoxy as a remedy.

In the Gita, it is said that achievement is in accordance with the idea. We must therefore begin with a clear idea about our religion itself. If we are harbouring the expectation, that while everything in our manner of living may be allowed to remain as usual, religion can be made to blossom from it, then we must requisition the services of that clever fraternity, who profess to make gold out of brass.

What then is this Hinduism of ours, when it reveals itself in its purity, like the sun when it rises above the obscurity of the mist and the tangled obstructions of the jungle on the lower horizon ?

I have already suggested its definition, when I said that man has a feeling that in him the creative manifestation of life has come to the end of a cycle, ready to ascend to one still wider and higher. When life first evolved its physical senses from the depth of amorphous darkness, it came to a wondrous world of forms, and this adventurous spirit of life is yet urging the spirit within man to develop an inner vision which will lead him through these endless forms into a world of infinite meaning, where he will cross the boundaries of the senses to a freedom which is ineffable.

Hinduism believes that this unfoldment of man's inner being

and revelation of the realm of spirit will gradually happen to him, when he realises his relationship with the Infinite through a life of self-control and self-sacrifice, when he feels the longing to adjust his activities to a faith which takes this world, not to be a mechanical combination but to be spiritual, and his own soul not an arena of ravenous passions, but a musical sphere of beauty and truth, that has its harmony with the keynote of creation.

The mistake made by Orthodoxy was, that when it tried, by means of ritual and observance, to confine within bounds the infinite, in order to suit some temporary convenience, it pulled tight the knot of the wrap, but let slip the treasure from within its folds. By not hesitating to truncate an idea, in order to make it fit in with the practical world, a great part of it may apparently be retained, but in reality its vital essence is destroyed. In this way, time and again, man cheats himself most with regard to that which he prizes most.

Thus have been formed two classes of pious men, one content merely to play at achievement with the object of its striving, another seeking, in retirement, away from those very objects, to keep its empty achievement pure. But such a situation can never last. When insensate indifference is everywhere, all doors closed, all lights out, and darkness and emptiness left so supreme that man in his desperation clutches even at them for support, the messenger of salvation, in some mysterious fashion, finds his way there and stands at the door unexpected, unrecognised, and looked upon by the cowering multitude as an enemy.

This was what happened in our country. It had come to this pass that our heaped-up, dead traditions had threatened to smother our consciousness of the Infinite, making petty our daily life, breaking up our communities into a hundred different sections, reducing our manhood to a narrow provincialism. We had ceased to be aware of the rule of the One, and were kept distracted by the tyranny of the many. In the nightmare, by which we were oppressed, we viewed the world as peopled with nameless terrors from whose depredations we sought to preserve our aimless lives, as far as we might, by charms and amulets, votive offerings and propitiatory sacrifices.

When thus the timidity of our minds, the weakness of our efforts, the diffidence in our intercourse, the narrowness in our outlook, the crass ignorance which pervaded every department of our lives, were dragging us down to the depths of our doom, a great shock from outside fell upon the tottering walls within which we were pent.

Those of us who were awakened by the shock realised, in an agony of returning consciousness, what it was we had lacked, what the darkness was which enveloped us, what meant the all-pervading lethargy, the joyless death-in-life, with which we had been stricken. Our very sky had been screened off, all access denied to light, the life-giving breezes from the Infinite shut out, a hundred barriers of artificiality set up against intercourse with the Universal. The cry went up from our heart : "We want freedom,—freedom from the mechanical, from the dark, from the dead!"

This cry is the cry of all humanity. It is the same all over the world. Here, man has hidden his true welfare behind the veil of antiquated custom ; there, in his attempts to grow bigger by acquisition and accumulation, he has allowed his self to eclipse that which is greater than self ; everywhere, whether it be by inert slothfulness or by unmeaning activity, he has been lost to the sense of his greatest good.

From its very birth, (and every time it has gained fresh life by shaking off the bonds of orthodoxy,) Hinduism has been characterised by its efforts to rescue itself from the depths of such forgetfulness, to rouse the faculties of man to their greatest power by making men realise themselves in their relation to the Infinite. The unshackled Hindu mind has always proclaimed this freedom of joy as the true object of man's religious striving. And whenever any particular scripture, temple, philosophy or ritual has usurped the place of such grand freedom, it has done so contrary to the spirit of truth and necessarily therefore of true Hinduism.

This much already becomes evident, that religious teaching of this character cannot consist merely in prescribing formulas to be learnt by heart, or rites to be repeated. At the same time, the difficulties due to the absence of that kind of definiteness which comes from outward forms, must not be shirked. We must not allow ourselves to be moved by regretful longing for those facilities of sectarian religion, be it Hindu or any other, which make the problem easier. What is the good of trying to make religion easy ? Dust is easy to get, not gold.

Just as health is a condition of man's whole body, so is religion of his whole nature. Health cannot be given in the same way as money is put into one's palm. But it may be induced by bringing about suitable conditions. Religious teaching, likewise, cannot be left to a school committee to be put on their syllabus along with

arithmetic and Euclid. No school inspector will be able to measure its progress. No examiner's blue pencil can assign it proper marks. An appropriate environment must be created in which religion may have its natural growth.

Men, who have attained realisation, have themselves told us that the way is *na medhaya, na bahuna srutena*, not through the intellect, nor vastness of erudition. That is to say, religion is not a thing to be taught and learnt, in the ordinary meaning of those terms. But no great man, up to now, has been able to tell us exactly how he arrived at his enlightenment. Seers have simply exclaimed: *Vedahametam*, I have known Him : *ya etad viduramritaste bhavanti*, those who know Him attain immortality. How He comes to be known is a truth of such intimate mystery, that it is not even patent to the knower. Had any seer been able to disclose the mystery, the problem of religious education would have ceased to exist.

It is true, there have been cases of enlightened men who have advised a definite religious procedure for their disciples. One set of these has said: "Purify your mind: avoid sin: make your inner self worthy of receiving the enlightenment, which shall come from within." Others have counselled the recourse to outward observances. Some of the latter prescribe the performance of rites; some enjoin the repetition of formulas, or meditation on symbolic images. But history has shown us how, whenever the religious effort is thus directed outwards, the door is thrown open to error; the imagination runs riot; the disciple, fascinated by the alluring comfort of lazy credulity, loses his way. Thereupon ensues self-delusion and the deluding of others. Nevertheless, there can be no question that many of those who give such advice have gained truth themselves. It would be wrong to charge them with a deliberate desire to mislead. At the same time, the fact that they have gained realisation for themselves does not preclude their being honestly mistaken. It is one thing to have arrived at enlightenment, and quite another to have a correct analytical idea of the path by which it was reached.

Take the case of a man who has an extraordinary digestion. If a poor dyspeptic should ask him about the mystery of his good appetite, he might in all good faith give the credit for it to the cigar which he is in the habit of reducing to ashes after every meal, quite unaware that his digesting is done in spite of it; nay more, having become accustomed to smoking after dinner, he might really feel that, in the absence of the cigar, his digestive apparatus fails to

display its wonted enthusiasm for its duty. We are told that the German poet, Schiller, used to keep rotten apples in his desk, because he found the strength of their aroma stimulating to his poetic faculty. In reply to the question of some admirer, as to how his poetical ideas came to him, he might, for sheer inability to assign a better reason, have put it down to the rotten apples.

The same is true of many popular habits and customs, which far from being the cause of a people's genius, rather weaken it and hamper its fullest expression. But while many wise men recognise this and seek to combat the tendency to make too much of such habits, there are others, born and bred therein, who cannot get rid of a certain dependence upon and affection for them. Though, as a matter of fact, the latter have become great only by inwardly transcending such habits, they do not realise that fact. On the contrary, even if they are driven to admit that such popular customs are not essential to a people's spiritual perfection, they persist in justifying them as having been initially useful in the case of their own temperament. The result of this is that lesser men, who have no inborn genius, imagine that they too have achieved greatness because of their adherence to the same customs; they wax intolerant, and cannot concede greatness to be possible where these observances are absent. For them, truth and conformity to custom become one and the same thing.

Attainments, which do not have their origin in external habit, but are the result of the unfolding of the inner nature of man, cannot be gained by artificial methods. They depend on favourable conditions. If religious feeling is not considered a mere sectarian accomplishment, but rather the fulfilment of humanity itself, then it must have a suitable environment for its exercise, and sufficient leisure for its growth. The surrounding light and air must be so ample that the soul may gain fresh life with every breath it draws. This amplitude is what the forest universities of ancient India offered for the spiritual education of her children. The ideal of perfection preached by the forest dwellers of ancient India runs through the heart of our classical literature and still dominates our mind.

The forest *Asrama* was the sacred abode, where human activity, in cadence with that reposefulness which is in universal nature, mingled in the discipline of man's pure disinterested endeavour. The spirit of the universe and the soul of man united to build up a temple for worship. This worship itself was service, unfettered by

the bonds of self-seeking. It is this spiritual unity which was set forth so truly and so purely by the great thinkers and teachers of ancient India in their forest *Asramas*; and it is this same ideal which we need for our religious growth today.

The religion of the modern time which does not ascribe any particular form to the subject of its worship, nor attributes any special efficacy to particular rites, but rather believes that outward observances carry with them a certain danger to man's intellect as well as to his moral nature,—such religion cannot be expected to keep a permanent hold over the minds of men by the mere preaching of its ideals.

The atmosphere of the *Asrama* is needed if the religious spirit in the modern age is to find its inner harmony and its living power. For, in the *Asrama* life, such a harmony exists. There are no artificial barriers between man and nature. Men and women and little children come naturally to regard bird and beast, tree and creeper, as their kith and kin. The subtle allurements and endless appurtenances of worldly comforts do not constantly distract the mind. The search after God is not merely an act of meditation, but is continued throughout the daily life in acts of sacrifice and compassion. Conscience is not imprisoned by any personal consideration of expediency. Its urgency is ever towards the higher ideal of universal good as the only final sanction.

There are truths which are of the nature of information, that can be added to our stock of knowledge from the outside. But there are other truths, of the nature of inspiration, which cannot be used to swell the number of our accomplishments. These latter are not like food, but are rather the appetite itself, that can only be strengthened by inducing harmony in our bodily functions. Religion is such a truth. It establishes the right centre for life's activities, giving them an eternal meaning; maintains the true standard of value for the objects of our striving; inspires in us the spirit of renunciation which is the spirit of humanity. It cannot be doled out in regulated measure, nor administered through the academic machinery of education. It must come immediate from the burning flame of spiritual life, in surroundings suitable for such life. The *Asrama*, the Forest University of ancient India, gave for our country the answer to the question as to how this Religion can be imparted.

It was in the *Asrama* where the harvest of religious thoughts,

reaped in a great period of Indian History, was garnered in the Upanishads. These had nothing to do with any institution ; they never harboured any creeds, nor built rigid walls round them of logical consistency ; and therefore people brought up in the atmosphere of some sectarian religion consider the texts contained in them merely as so many seeds of religious philosophy. But there can be no doubt that these seeds came out of the fruit of a true life of religion, fully lived. Such religion contains the true spirit of liberation in its essence of spiritual truth because it is free from the bondage of sect.

What is remarkable about the religion of the Upanishads is that, though it was worked out by individuals who were not tied to each other by a common bond of conformity, a natural cord of unity nevertheless runs through their different thoughts of all variety of shades. For myself, I believe in such freedom of spiritual realisation, and I feel that the habit of obedience produced by the constant guidance of fixed creeds and ever-watchful sects enfeebles the spiritual instinct of man and gives rise to materialistic ideas and practices disguised in religious phraseology.

What is most remarkable in the history of our religion is the fact that the people belonging to the despised community in this country, banished from the barricaded shrines of worship exclusively owned by the prouder castes, have reached a religion which with its simple dignity transcends all boundaries of caste arrogance. These people had no scriptures, no schools, no temples ; they only had their unfenced atmosphere of freedom kept pure by the helpful contempt of the learned orthodoxy, and their unsophisticated devotion naturally came to the altar of *advaitam*, the One Supreme, comprehending the souls of all beings.

Let me conclude my paper with the translation of a characteristic poem by a Baul poet by the name of Madan whose courage to decry the conventional paths of the pious as leading to spiritual futility is made evident in this song.

Thy path, O Lord, is hidden by mosque and temple:

I hear thine own call, but the *guru* stops the way.

What gives peace to my mind, sets the world ablaze,—

The cult of the One dies in the conflict of the many.

The door to it is closed by many a lock, of Koran, Puran and the rosary.

Even the way of renunciation is full of tribulation:

Wherefore weeps Madan in despair.



Benode Mukherjee

SACRED AND PROFANE SCIENCE

Translated from the French of René Guénon by Ananda K.
Coomaraswamy¹

IN civilisations of the traditional (*smārta*) type, intellectual intuition takes precedence ; in other words, the purely metaphysical doctrine (*veda*, *śruti*) is the essential, and all else is connected with it consequentially or by way of application to the various orders of contingent reality (*avidyā*). This is conspicuously so in the case of social institutions ; on the other hand, it is equally true of the sciences, that is branches of knowledge pertaining to the relative, which branches of knowledge can only, in civilisations of this sort, be regarded as merely dependent upon or in a way as extensions or reflections of the absolute and principial knowledge (*jñāna*). Thus the true hierarchy is always and everywhere preserved. The relative is not indeed considered to

1 From *La Crise du Monde Moderne*, Paris, 1927. The translator holds that no living writer in modern Europe is more significant than René Guénon, whose task it has been to expound the universal metaphysical tradition that has been the essential foundation of every past culture, and which represents the indispensable basis for any civilisation deserving to be so called. In Guénon's view (shared by the translator) Europe has diverged from this path ever farther and farther since the thirteenth century ; only since that time have Europe and Asia been truly divided in spirit. The true contrast is then not so much between Europe and Asia as such, as between Mediaeval Europe and Asia on the one hand, and the modern world on the other. Europe and Asia can meet, and can only meet in complete accord, upon the common ground of the metaphysical and purely intellectual tradition, upon the basis of what is called in our terms *sanātana dharma*, though it is by no means to be understood that this "wisdom uncreate, the same now as it ever was, and the same to be for evermore" (St Augustine) belongs to the Indian, European, or any other part of humanity exclusively.

The present translation may serve to introduce to Indian readers the work of this author as a whole. Of Guénon's other works, *L'Homme et son Devenir selon le Vedanta*, probably the best account of the Vedanta available in any European language, has been published in English under the title *Man and his Becoming*. Other volumes include *Introduction générale à l'Etude des Doctrines hindoues* ; *Le Symbolisme de la Croix* ; *Les Etats multiples de l'Etre* ; *Autorité spirituelle et Pouvoir temporel* ; *Le Roi du Monde* ; *L'Esotérisme de Dante* ; *L'Erreur spirite* ; *Le Théosophisme, Histoire d'une Pseudo-religion* ; *Orient et Occident* ; *La Crise du Monde moderne*. M. Guénon is also a constant contributor to *La Voile d'Isis*, a monthly magazine devoted to the "Unanimous and Everlasting Tradition" in all its forms. All of these books can be obtained from Chacornac Frères, 11 Quai Saint Michel, Paris, Ve.

have no existence,¹ which would be absurd ; it is considered to the extent it deserves, but it is kept in its proper place, which can only be secondary and subordinate ; moreover, even in this relative field there are very different degrees of reality, depending upon the greater or less distance which separates the matters considered from the realm of principles (*tattva*).

As regards science, then, there are two radically different and even mutually incompatible conceptions, which we may refer to as respectively the traditional, and the modern. We have often had occasion to allude to these "traditional sciences", which existed in antiquity and in the Middle Ages, and which continue to exist for ever in the East, though the very idea of them is altogether foreign to the Westerners of our age. It must be added that every civilisation has been in possession of "traditional sciences" of some particular kind proper to itself ; for here we are no longer in the order of universal principles, where pure metaphysics alone applies, but in the order of adaptations (*upaya*) ; and here, just because it is the realm of contingency that is in question, we have to take account of all the mental and other conditions of the particular peoples ; and we can even say, to take account of such and such a period in the existence of such a people, because there are times when "readaptations" are required. These "readaptations" are merely changes of form, affecting nothing in the actual essence of the tradition ; as regards the metaphysical doctrine, only the expression of it can be modified, in the same way that one language is translated into another ; whatever may be the forms it assumes in order to express itself so far as expression is possible, there is absolutely only one metaphysics, just as there is only one truth. But when we turn to applications, the case is naturally altered : with the sciences, and likewise with social institutions, we are in the realm of form and multiplicity ; and therefore we can say that different forms establish what are really different sciences, even if these sciences have to a certain extent the same object. Logicians generally think of any science as fully defined by its object, but this is to err on the side of over simplification ; the point of view from which the object is regarded must also form a part of the definition of the science.

There is an indefinite multiplicity of possible sciences ; it may

¹ It is, in point of fact, the relative alone that strictly speaking ex-ists (*sthā*) or becomes (*bhū*). (Translator).

happen that several sciences are concerned with the same things, but under such different aspects, or again employing methods so different or with such different ends, as to be nevertheless really distinct sciences. This may happen, in particular, in the case of the "traditional sciences" of the various civilisations, which although they are comparable amongst themselves, and not therefore necessarily alike, in many cases cannot in fact be referred to by the same names. It is evident that the difference will be much greater, if instead of comparing the "traditional sciences", which are all in any case fundamentally of the same character, we make a general comparison of these sciences with science as the term is nowadays understood ; at a first glance, it may sometimes seem that their objects are the same in both cases ; and yet, so different is the knowledge of the object afforded by the two sciences, that after a closer examination one hesitates to affirm an identity, even in any single respect.

Some examples may be useful to make clearer this matter ; and to begin with, we take one of very wide application, that of "physics" as understood respectively by the ancients and by the moderns ; moreover, this is a case in which there is no need to go beyond the western world to recognize the profound difference that separates the two conceptions. The term "physics" in its original and etymological acceptance, means merely the "science of nature", without any further limitation ; it is then that science which has to do with the most general laws of "becoming", for "nature" and "becoming" are essentially synonyms, and it was thus that the Greeks, and notably Aristotle, understood it. If there be more special sciences concerned with what belongs to the same order, they will be then merely "departments" of physics, proper to this or that more narrowly defined field. There is something significant then in the change of meaning which the moderns have imposed on this word "physics", using it as the exclusive designation of one particular science amongst others, all of which are indifferently sciences of nature. This fact is connected with the fragmentation which, as we have already remarked, is one of the characteristics of modern science ; it is connected with the "specialisation" that has been developed by the analytical spirit, and pushed so far as to make it impossible for those who have been influenced by it even to conceive of a science dealing with nature as a whole. Some of the inconveniences of this "specialisation" have been noticed, especially the narrowness of view that is one of its inevitable consequences ; but apparently even those who have felt this most

strongly, have nevertheless resigned themselves to consider it a necessary evil, a result of the accumulation of detailed knowledge which no one would be able to survey at once ; they have not understood, on the one hand, that these detailed knowledges are in themselves insignificant, and are not worth the sacrifice of a synthetic knowledge which, even when it confines itself to the relative, is of a much higher order ; nor on the other hand have they understood that the practical difficulty met with when we attempt to unify their multiplicity arises solely from the fact that we are forbidden to connect them with any superior principle, and inasmuch as we persist so obstinately in proceeding from below and from without, although the opposite procedure would be necessary were we seeking for a science having a real speculative value.

If we compare the old physics, not with what the moderns call by this name, but with the totality of the natural sciences as now actually established (to which it really corresponds), it is then to be observed as the first difference, that there is now a division into manifold "specialities" which are so to speak mutually strangers. However, that is merely the most external aspect of the question, and we must not imagine that we could reach an equivalent of the ancient physics by combining all the special sciences. The fact is that the point of view is quite different, and here we see emerging that essential distinction between the two conceptions, to which we referred above. The traditional conception, we affirm, connects all the sciences with the principles of which they are the particular applications ; and it is precisely this connection which the modern conception does not admit. For Aristotle, physics was only "second" in regard to metaphysics, that is to say that physics depended upon metaphysics, and was essentially merely the application of superior principles to the realm of nature, which principles are reflected in the laws of nature ; and we might say the same of mediaeval "cosmogony". The modern conception, on the contrary, pretends to make the sciences independant, by denying all that transcends them, or at least by declaring "unknowable" and refusing to consider it , which is practically the same thing as denying it. This negation had long been in existence before any one thought of setting it up as a systematic theory under names such as "positivism" and "agnosticism" ; for it may be justly said that this negation is really the point of departure from which the whole of modern science proceeds. Still, it was hardly before the nineteenth century that there was seen the spectacle of men who gloried in their ignorance—

to proclaim oneself an "agnostic" is just that,—and presuming to forbid to all others a knowledge of what they did not themselves know ; which marked one further stage in the intellectual decadence of the West.

In trying to make a radical separation of the sciences from any superior principle under pretension of assuring their independence, the modern conception robbed them of all deep significance and even of any real interest from the point of view of knowledge, and this can only lead to a deadlock, since it imprisons them within an inevitably limited field.¹ The development that takes place within this field is by no means, as some imagine, a deepening ; on the contrary, it remains altogether superficial, being no more than that dispersion in detail which we remarked above, no more than an analysis as sterile as it is laborious ; an analysis which could be indefinitely extended without taking a single step on the road of true understanding. Moreover, it must be confessed that generally speaking it is not for its own sake that Westerners are devoted to these extensions of science ; what they have in view is not a knowledge, even of the lower order, but practical applications ;² and to be convinced of this, needs only to observe how easily most of our contemporaries identify science with industry, and how many men look upon the engineer as the true type of the man of learning. But that is another matter, with which we shall deal later.

Science as thus established in the modern way has lost not merely in depth, but we might also say in solidity ; for while a dependence on principles would involve a participation in their unchangeability, so far as the object considered allowed, a science limited entirely to the world of change can find there nothing more stable than itself, no fixed point on which to rest ; not based on any absolute certainty, it reduces itself to probabilities and approximations,³ or purely

¹ It may be observed that something of the same sort has been brought about in the social order, where the moderns have endeavoured to divide the temporal from the spiritual. No doubt these are two different things, inasmuch as they are related to different domains, just as in the case of metaphysics and the sciences ; but by an error intrinsic to the analytical spirit, we overlook that distinction is not the same thing as separation ; consequently, the temporal power loses its legitimacy, and the same may be said of the sciences, in the intellectual field.

² Even when knowledge is sought for its own sake, the impulse in general is founded in what was aptly called by Abelard, *turpis curiositas*. (Translator).

³ It is notorious that the "laws of nature" propounded by modern science are nothing but predictions representing a statistical probability. (Translator).

hypothetical constructions which are the creation of individual fancy. So even if it happens by chance that modern science, by a very round-about route, arrives at some result which seems to agree with certain data of the old "traditional sciences", it would be a great mistake to see in this a confirmation of them, of which indeed they have no need; and it would be waste of time to try to reconcile the totally different points of view, or establish an agreement with hypothetical theories which may, very likely, be altogether discredited a few years later. ¹ The matters dealt with by this science necessarily indeed belong to the realm of hypothesis, whereas for "traditional science" it was very different, because these matters presented themselves as the certain consequences of truths known intuitively and therefore infallibly, in the metaphysical order. ² It is too a singular illusion, peculiar to modern "experimentalism", to believe that a theory can be proved by facts, whereas in reality the same facts can always be just as well explained by several different theories; and certain proponents of the experimental method, Claude Bernard for example, have themselves recognized that they could only interpret their observations by the help of "preconceived ideas", without which the facts remained "brute facts" without any meaning or real scientific value.³

While we are speaking of "experimentalism", the opportunity may be taken to reply to a question which may be posed in this connection, as follows: "Why have the properly experimental sciences undergone a development in modern civilisation, such as was not paralleled in other civilisations?" It is because these sciences are those of the sensible domain, those of matter, and at the same time those which lend themselves to the most immediate practical applications; their development, accompanied by what we take the liberty to call the "superstition of facts", therefore closely corresponds to specifically modern tendencies; whereas, on the contrary, former ages did not find enough of interest

1 The same holds good as regards the religious point of view in the case of a kind of "apologetic" which pretends to reach an agreement with the results of modern science—a perfectly illusory labour, and one that constantly needs to be done over again and which moreover offers the curious danger of seeming to ally religion with changing and ephemeral conceptions, of which it should be altogether independent.

2 It would be easy to cite examples; we mention only, as one of the most striking, the difference between the conception of ether in Hindu cosmology and in modern science.

3 From the standpoint of traditional philosophy, "mere facts" are regarded as absolutely unintelligible in themselves; experience leading only to an "estimative knowledge", such as animals have (Translator.)

in these sciences to lead them to devote themselves to them to the point of neglecting knowledge of a higher order. Understand, it is not our intention to speak of any kind of knowledge whatever, even of a lower order, as illegitimate ; what is illegitimate, is the abuse that follows when matters of this kind absorb the whole of men's activity, as is the case at present. It may even be conceived that in a normal civilisation the sciences established by experimental methods would, like the others, be related to principles, and thus provided with a real speculative value ; and if in fact this has not been the case, it is because attention has been directed by choice in the other direction, and also because, even when it was a matter of studying the sensible world so far as it seemed to be of interest to do so, the traditional data made it possible to undertake such a study by other means and from another point of view.

We remarked above that one of the characteristics of the present day is the exploitation of everything that until now had been neglected as a thing of too little importance for men to devote to it all their time and energy, but yet must also be developed before the end of the cycle, inasmuch as these things existed amongst the possibilities destined to be realised within it ; this is the case in particular of the experimental sciences which have arisen during the latter centuries. There are also some modern sciences which really represent, quite literally, "residues" of the old sciences, no longer understood ; it is the lowest part of these latter sciences which, in a period of decadence, is isolated and detached and crudely materialised, and then provides the point of departure for a quite different development in a sense agreeing with modern tendencies, so as to end with the establishment of sciences which have no longer anything really in common with those that came before them. It is then, for example, untrue to say, what is generally said, that astrology and alchemy have become modern astronomy and chemistry, even though in this opinion there is an element of truth from a purely historical point of view, namely that element of truth to which we have just referred ; if in fact the latter of these sciences proceed from the former in a certain sense, it is not as is pretended by way of "evolution" or "progress", but on the contrary by degeneration ; and this requires some further explanation.

Let us say first that the attribution of a different meaning to the words "astrology" and "astronomy" is a relatively recent thing ; the Greeks employed these two words indifferently to denote the whole that both now refer to. It would seem then at first sight as if this

were a case of division by "specialisation", established between what were at first only parts of one single science ; but what is here peculiar is that one of these parts, that namely which represents the most material aspect of the said science, has been independently developed, while on the contrary, the other part has disappeared entirely. This is so far true that we no longer know what the old astrology really was, and even those who have tried to reconstruct it have merely fallen into absolute contradictions, either through trying to find in it the equivalent of an experimental science, resorting to statistics and the calculation of probabilities, thus proceeding from a position which could not in any sense have been that of antiquity or the Middle Ages, or by merely trying to restore an "art of divination", which represents hardly more than an aberration of astrology when it was dying out, and in which there can be recognized at best a very inferior application hardly worthy of consideration, as can still be remarked in oriental civilisations.

The case of chemistry is perhaps still clearer and more typical ; and as for the modern ignorance of alchemy, it is at least as great as it is of astrology. True alchemy was essentially a science of the cosmological order, and was at the same time applicable to the human order, because of the analogy (*anurūpatā*) of "macrocosm" and "microcosm" ; further, it was constituted expressly in order to allow of a transposition (*parāvṛtti*) in a purely spiritual sense, which gave its teaching a symbolic value and a higher meaning, making it one of the most complete types of "traditional science". It was not this alchemy that gave birth to modern chemistry, with which it has nothing in common ; modern chemistry is a deformation of alchemy, a deviation in the strictest sense of the term, a deviation from which there arose, perhaps already in the Middle Ages, the misunderstanding of some who, unable to penetrate the true significance of symbols, took everything literally, and thinking it was all a matter of material operations, plunged into a more or less disorderly course of experiments. It is just these people whom the alchemists called in irony "bellow blowers" and "charcoal burners" that were the true forerunners of the modern chemists ; and so it is that modern science has been built up with the aid of the debris of ancient sciences, with materials which these rejected and abandoned to the ignorant and "profane". Let us add that the so-called restorers of alchemy, such as are to be found amongst our contemporaries, are merely prolonging this same deviation, and that their researches are as far from tradi-

tional alchemy as are those of the astrologers of whom we spoke just now from the ancient astrology ; and that is why we have a right to say that the "traditional sciences" of the West are really lost to the moderns.

We restrict ourselves to these few examples ; it would however be easy to give many more, taken from slightly different orders, but showing everywhere the same degeneration. One might demonstrate in the same way that psychology, as now understood, that is, the study of mental phenomena as such, is a natural product of anglo-saxon empiricism¹ and of the eighteenth century, and that the corresponding point of view was for the ancients to such an extent negligible, that if they happened to consider it incidentally, it would never have occurred to them to make a special science of it ; all that might be of value in such a science was for them transformed and assimilated in the higher points of view (*darśana*).² In quite another field it might be shown likewise that modern mathematics represents, so to speak, nothing but the shell of Pythagorean mathematics, its purely "exoteric" side ; the ancient idea of numbers is no longer even comprehensible to moderns, and that is because here also, the higher part of the science, which together with its traditional character, gave it a real intellectual value, has altogether disappeared ; and this case is quite analogous to that of astrology. But we cannot survey all the sciences in succession, for this would be tiresome ; it seems that enough has been said to make intelligible the nature of the change to which the modern sciences owe their origin ; which change is the very opposite of "progress", and represents a veritable decline in intelligence. And now we shall return to more general considerations regarding the respective roles of the "traditional sciences" and modern sciences, and the profound difference that distinguishes the destinies of each.

Any science whatever, as traditionally conceived, is less of interest for its own sake than inasmuch as it represents a prolongation or secondary branch of the doctrine, the essential part of which, as aforesaid, is purely metaphysical.³ In effect, notwithstanding that any science

1 The well known method of "muddling through". (Translator).

2 It may be remarked that the curative results which modern psychology attempts to bring about were in the case of a religion such as Christianity obtained in connection with Confession (also a Buddhist practise), or in the case of a metaphysics like that of Hinduism by means of contemplative exercises directed towards an untying of all "the knots of the heart". (Translator).

3 This is, for example, expressed by such a term as *upaveda*, applied in India to certain "traditional sciences", and indicating their subordination to the Veda, the sacred knowledge of the highest order.

whatever is assuredly legitimate, only provided it occupies the position that really belongs to it by its own nature (*svabhāva*), it is easy to understand that for whoever is in possession of a knowledge in a superior order (*ya evam vidvān*), the lower knowledge necessarily loses much of its interest, and can retain this interest only in so far as it is so to speak a function of the principal knowledge, that is to the extent that on the one hand it reflects the principal knowledge in some given plane of the domain of the contingent, and on the other, to the extent that it is capable of leading up to this same principal knowledge; which in such a case can never be lost sight of or sacrificed to more or less accidental considerations. These are the two complementary roles proper to the "traditional sciences": on the one side, as applications of the doctrine, they allow of a mutual linking up of all orders of reality, an integration of them in the total synthesis; and on the other, they are, for some at least, and according to their individual aptitudes, a preparation for a higher knowledge, a sort of stairway to the latter; and in their hierarchical arrangement, according to the levels of existence to which they belong, they form then, as it were, so many steps by the help of which it is possible to raise oneself to the purely intellectual level.¹ It is only too obvious that the modern sciences cannot in any manner fulfil either of these roles; that is why they are and can be only a "profane science", while the "traditional sciences", because of their adhesion to metaphysical principles, are effectively included in the "sacred science".

The coexistence of the two roles referred to does not imply any contradiction or vicious circle, whatever those may suppose who look at the matter only superficially; and we must insist somewhat upon this point. We might say that there are two points of view, the one downward and the other upward, the first corresponding to a development of knowledge starting from principles and proceeding to more and more remote applications, the second corresponding to a gradual acquisition of this same knowledge by a progress from lower to higher, or if you will, from without to within. It is not then a question of whether the sciences ought to be built up from below or downwards from

1 In our study, *L'Esoterisme de Dante*, we called attention to the symbolism of the ladder, the steps of which, in various traditions, correspond to certain sciences and at the same time to states of being. This necessarily implies that these sciences, instead of being regarded from the "profane" point of view of the moderns, were capable of a transposition which endowed them with a properly speaking "initiatory" significance.

above, not a question of whether in order for them to exist at all we must take our departure either from the knowledge of principles or contrariwise from that of the sensible world ; this question, which can be asked from the standpoint of "profane" philosophy, and really seems to have been asked in this field, more or less explicitly by Greek antiquity—this question, we say, does not exist for the "sacred science", which can only proceed from universal principles. What really deprives the question of all utility, is the premier role of intellectual intuition, the most immediate of all means of knowledge, as well as the highest, and absolutely independent of the exercise of any faculty of the sensible or even the rational order.¹ The sciences cannot be constructed with validity, as "sacred sciences" unless by those who first and foremost are in full possession of the principial knowledge, and are thereby exclusively qualified, in accord with the most rigorous traditional orthodoxy, to effect all the adaptations that may be necessitated by circumstances of time and place.² But, when the sciences have been thus built up, their teaching may follow an opposite direction ; they are in a certain sense "illustrations" (*pratika*) of the pure doctrine, which may for some types of mind make it more easily accessible ; and just because these "illustrations" have to do with the world of multiplicity, the almost indefinite diversity of their points of view may correspond to the no less diversity in aptitude of individual minds, whose horizon is limited to this same world of multiplicity. The paths by which knowledge can be reached may be extremely varied on the lowest level, and become more and more unified only as one rises to higher levels. No one of these preparatory steps is absolutely indispensable, for these are only contingent means (*upaya*), having no common measure with the end to be attained ; it may even happen that some, in whom the contemplative tendency predominates, may attain to the veritably intellectual intuition at one stroke and without the help of any such means ;³ but that

1 Cf. St Augustine, speaking of the purely intellectual or speculative understanding, "The eternal mirror leads the minds of those who look therein to a knowledge of all things better than in any other fashion". (Translator).

2 Those, in other words, who in India are referred to as Brahmins, and through whom there has been a direct transmission of the undeviating truths. (Translator).

3 That is why, in Hindu doctrine, the Brahmins are required to direct their thought always towards the supreme knowledge, while Ksatriyas should apply themselves to the study of the different successive stages by which this supreme knowledge is gradually reached.

is a rather exceptional case, and more often it is what we should call a matter of convenience to proceed in the ascending order. To make this clear we might also have employed the traditional image of the "cosmic wheel" (*cakra*) : the circumference has no real existence except in relation to the centre ; but those beings who are at the circumference must necessarily start from that position, or strictly speaking from the point thereon at which they actually find themselves, and follow the ray to reach the centre.¹ Furthermore, because of the correspondence between all orders of reality, the truths of a lower order can be regarded as symbols of those of the higher orders, and may thus serve as "supports" (*ālamba*) by which to reach the latter by analogy ;² it is this that endows a science with superior or "anagogic" significance, a meaning deeper than its own, and such as to make it veritably a "sacred science".³

Any science, whatever its object, may take on this character, if only it has been constituted and is regarded in the traditional spirit ; then there is occasion only to take into account the relative degrees of importance of the various sciences, according to the hierarchy of the different planes of reality with which they are connected ; but whatever their degree, their character and function are, as traditionally conceived, essentially the same. What thus applies to all science is equally true for every art, since art can have a properly symbolic value which enables it to serve as a support for meditation (*dhṛyālaṃba*) and because its ascertained rules are, like the laws enunciated by the sciences, reflections and applications of fundamental principles ;⁴ and so there are, in all normal civilisations, "traditional arts", which are as much unknown to the modern Westerners as are the "traditional sciences".⁵ The truth is, there is really no such thing as a "profane

1 On this symbolism of the wheel cf. my "*Kha* and other words denoting Zero, in connection with the Metaphysics of space", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, 1934. (Translator).

2 Cf. *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, VIII, 2, "This world is in the likeness of that world, and vice-versa. (Translator).

3 This is, for example, the role of the astronomical symbolism that is so often made use of by the various traditional teachings ; and this serves to indicate the true nature of such sciences as the old astrology.

4 Cf. *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, VI, 27, "It is in imitation of the *divya śilpāni* that any *śilpa* is gotten here" ; *Nāṭya Śāstra*, 11, 5. (Translator).

5 The art of the mediaeval builders may be cited as an especially noteworthy example of these "traditional arts", for the practise of this art implied a real knowledge of the corresponding sciences.

field" set over against a "sacred field"¹; there is merely a "profane point of view", which is strictly speaking nothing more than the ignorant point of view.² That is why "profane science", that of the moderns, may properly be called, as we indicated above, an "ignorant manner of knowing"; a knowledge of a lower order, wholly bounded by the limits of the lowest reality, and ignorant of all that exceeds those limits, ignorant of any end superior to itself, no less than of any principle that might assure it a legitimate, however humble, place in the hierarchy of integrated knowledge; irrevocably shut up in the relative and limited field in which it pleased it to affirm its independence, and thus by its own act cut off from all transcendent truth and supreme knowledge; this is but a vain and deceptive science, which is really worthless and leads nowhere.

This discussion may have made it clear how great is the poverty of the modern world in all that concerns science, and how that same science of which it is so proud is nothing but a deviation and like a falling away from true science, such as for us is wholly to be identified with what we have called "sacred science" or "traditional science". Modern science, proceeding from an arbitrary limitation of knowledge to one particular order, viz, the lowest order, that of the material and sensible, has by the very fact of this limitation and its immediate consequences lost all intellectual value, that is at least if we allow to "intellectuality" the full meaning of the word, and decline to share the "rationalistic" error, decline, that is, to identify the pure intellect with reason, which amounts to the same thing as denying intellectual intuition altogether. What underlies this error, like so many other modern errors, what

1 That sacred literatures make no real distinction of "sacred" from "profane" love, and freely employ erotic imagery to express the most exalted intellectual intuitions is, for example, an occasion of bewilderment to those who do not understand that nothing is good or evil in itself, but only according to our use of it, and at the same time are blind to the analogy that links all levels of reference. (Translator).

4 To be assured of this, it suffices to consider such facts as the following: that one of the most "sacred" sciences, cosmogony to wit, which finds a place as such in all Scriptures, including the Hebrew Bible, has for the moderns become the object of the most "profane" hypotheses; the scientific field is really the same in both cases, but the point of view is entirely different.

lies at the root of all such scientific deviation as we have expounded, is what may be called "individualism", which is really the same thing as the anti-traditional (*nastika*) spirit, the many manifestations of which spirit in every field is one of the main factors of the disorder that prevails today.



1. And similarly, has been the basis of all the "artistic deviation" through which the arts of the present day have lost all real value and significance. (Translator).

A SCHOOL OF MANKIND

Paul Geheeb

IT may seem very out-of-date to speak of a School of Mankind. It was the fashion at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th, to talk much of humanity and citizenship of the world ; but the history of the last hundred years seems to prove that humanity is as yet only an empty, abstract concept dwelling in the brain of a Kant, a Herder or a Schiller. Nevertheless, as Nietzsche once said : "The decisive happens in spite of the facts"; and just because the idea of such a plan seems to us out-of-date, there is nothing our age needs so badly as a School of Mankind.

One ideal remains fixed before our eyes : that of the economic and cultural co-operation of mankind bound together in one brotherhood. Such a macrocosm should be mirrored in its essential features in the microcosm of the school community.

In considering all human and cultural evolution we must start with the individual. Human growth is first of all a completely individual matter. Pindar's saying, *Become what thou art*, expresses the final aim of all human development. Goethe formulated the same ideal in the verses :

"Gleich sei keiner dem andern ; doch gleich sei jeder dem Höchsten.

Wie das zu machen ? Es sei jeder vollendet in sich."

(Let none be like another ; yet each be like the Highest. How can that be ? Let each be perfectly himself.)

Thus too the development of mankind is primarily a matter of individual peoples, individual nations. Each of us is first of all a Swiss, or a German, or a Frenchman, and develops as such. All education is conditioned by nationality, is dependent upon geography, economics and political form of the particular nation. Every civilised state requires universal education to protect the child from abuse by the family or the society, and to assure to the individual free development and education, thus treating the individual as an end in himself. Happy the nation whose leaders wisely confine themselves to this task and allow full freedom to the individual for cultural development, following the conception outlined by Wilhelm von Humboldt in his

early work entitled "Ideen zu einem Versuch, die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staates zu bestimmen" (An Essay on the Limits of State Activity).

National education is inevitable in so far as every child grows up surrounded by the scenery and culture of his country, the unifying element of which is both historically and organically the mother tongue. For almost a quarter of a century I was the director of the Odenwaldschule, and during that time I have often been much puzzled to answer the question frequently asked as to the measures we took to instil in our children a love of their country. An educational colony, living in glorious German scenery and introducing German children in the first place to the riches of German culture, what further can it do to inculcate true patriotism ?

Nevertheless, just as in such an "educational province" we experience daily the normal tension which exists between the individual and the community,—the two foci of all cultural development,—so we should get our young people to experience in practice the further tension that comes from the relation of the nation to mankind. It is not enough, in order to achieve this, that a national school should accept children of other nations as its guests, so to speak, in the way the Odenwald school did (about a fifth of the pupils of the Odenwald were foreigners). In the School of Mankind, as far as possible, all the great cultures of the present day would be represented,—not only the western cultures, French, Anglo-Saxon, German, Slavic, but also the eastern ones, especially the Chinese and the Indian,—each with its own separate working community, consisting of worthy representatives of the particular culture as teachers and as children belonging to the race and nation in question. These communities would exist side by side in the school with equal rights and would mutually enrich one another. In course of time it should be possible to attract fine educationists from the different countries as well as children of the most diverse nations, and thus build up each separate community in such a way that it embodied worthily the national culture and could introduce the newcomer to it in an attractive way.

Imagine then a school in the form of a Landerziehungsheim (country boarding school), made up of five or six of such cultural communities, each of which consists of an average at first of twenty members, teachers and children, belonging to a particular nation. These independent communities would find their happy synthesis in

the consciousness of representing ideally the culture of Mankind. The government of the whole would rest in the hand of a small committee consisting of a representative of each community. It is possible that for a time there might be one person who held all the threads of government in his hands. It will not be hard to overcome language difficulties. In no case should one language dominate. Besides a thorough study of the mother tongue, it would be taken for granted that three languages would be learnt, English, French and German. Each community would be an independent group, living if possible in a separate house. School assemblies, religious worship, common meals and many other occasions would suffice to unite all these national communities into one harmonious whole. The basis of organisation would be not the language but the cultural unity. Another principle of division would however be introduced by the attempt to form working groups in particular subjects consisting of members of different nations in so far as insurmountable technical differences, such as those of method, do not exist. Such groups of boys and girls belonging to different nations would not only work in the shops at carpentry, book-binding, weaving, etc., but would easily be formed for the natural sciences and also for courses in the general history of civilisation. When a child belonging to one of the great cultures entered the school he would normally join the community of his own nation. In other cases the decision would depend upon such factors as attitude and inclination and upon the question as to which community would help the child's development most. Account would also, of course, have to be taken of previous training and knowledge of the language. The more firmly grounded a child was in the culture of his own nation (to lay this foundation would be the chief task of each national community), the closer and more fruitful would be his contacts with other foreign communities.

I know that in many lands this idea of a School of Mankind hovers as a vision and a hope before the eyes of an increasing number of young teachers ; they look with longing for its realisation. The ubiquitous microbes of nationalism and fascism have caused a most happy reaction ; for unnumbered millions have become aware of the desire to establish above the mutually distrustful nations, bristling with arms, a community of Mankind serving a common ideal. The evil moral consequences of the world war have increasingly convinced men during the last twenty years of the value of education in the sense of character formation. The economic crisis, besides, which

might lead many superficial observers to think that soon nobody will have any money left for education, has made numberless parents realise that they can leave their children no better and safer heritage than as complete an education as possible,—one that shall equip them physically and mentally, technically and morally, to face the terrible problems of the modern world. From all countries, therefore, children should flock to this School of Mankind once it is founded. Expensive boarding schools, which provide the spoilt children of rich parents with comfortable lives and much service as the result of little effort, have no right to exist to-day. The kind of school we are thinking of presupposes that the principle of education for self-government shall be bravely carried through to its ultimate consequences. It would be a school community in which each member, from the youngest to the oldest, contributed to the support of the whole, every one being responsible for it according to the extent of his powers and mental development. All could take part in the necessary work in house, garden and field, so that a simple and externally unassuming life, not requiring any servants, would be accepted as the normal and desirable way of living.

My late friend Dr. Becker, at one time Minister of Education for Prussia, once outlined the problem of education in the present cultural crisis in a short article of great insight towards the end of which he sketched the spirit of such a community as I am contemplating in the following words : "Only when one recognizes in others—no matter of what nationality, class, or religion—the Eternal and Divine that one feels in oneself and for which one claims the respect of others, only then will the state of mind exist on which the temple of a new humanity can be erected. By the united effort of nations working together an international organisation can be created, but one can only create the international spirit by a new understanding as between man and man. One must have the courage to adopt an attitude of mind which allows to others all that one demands for oneself. True internationalism rests upon the basis of national education. Only upon such a foundation, utopian though it may seem, can anything fruitful be done. For all national education aims at bridging over and reconciling class antagonisms and religious intolerance. Where such national education starts from the purely human standpoint, as it must to be effective, it inevitably serves the cause of international reconciliation at the same time."

When Kant in 1714 published his "Idea of a Universal History adapted to World Citizens", he felt confident that reasonably intelligent

political leaders would never again allow a war to break out. Since then we have become convinced with H. G. Wells that world peace is fundamentally an educational problem, although we are equally well aware that educators work more slowly than diplomats and armament firms. But of our final success we remain assured. For we are of the faith of Schiller:

“Von der Menschheit—du kannst von ihr nie gross genug denken ;
Wie du im Busen sie trägst, prägst du in Taten sie aus.”

(Of human kind you can never think highly enough ; For on the way you think of it your humanity itself depends.)



THE HIGHEST BRAVERY

[*The following passage from a speech to students by Mahatma Gandhi is worthy of close study today. C. F. A.*]

TO kill and to be killed in fighting an enemy are acts of bravery, but to stand the blows of your adversaries and not to retaliate is a greater form of bravery, and that is precisely what India has been training herself for. This struggle through non-violence can be described as a process of purification, the underlying idea being that a nation loses its liberty owing to some of its own weaknesses, and immediately we shed our weaknesses, we regain our liberty. No people on earth can be finally subjected without their own co-operation, voluntary or involuntary. It is involuntary co-operation when for fear of some physical hurt you submit to a tyrant or a despot. I made the discovery, at an early stage of the movement, that for success in such a movement character must be the foundation. We also found that real education consisted, not in packing the brain with facts and figures, or in passing examinations by reading numerous books, but in developing character. I do not know to what extent you students lay stress upon character, rather than upon intellectual studies, but I can say this, that if you explore the possibilities of non-violence you will find that without character it will prove a profitless study.



A SURVEY OF THE CONTINENTS

C. F. Andrews

MY life began in Europe and then I was drawn to go to Asia and after that to Africa. Then my steps turned to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands which I have visited twice over on long journeys. And then still later I came to North America and went across that vast continent as far as Vancouver on one side, to Halifax on the other, passing down afterwards through the West Indies to South America. Thus it is possible for me to say that there is not a single continent of the earth, except the Antarctic, that I have not lived in, with such an experience as to have found out something of its secret.

In order to tell my story, I shall begin, not in the order of my own experience, but rather from the point of view of the history of the world ; and here, Asia takes the first place without a rival among the great Continents. For Asia was surely the Mother of the human race ; and through many historical generations, it was from Asia rather than from any other Continent that there went forth words of spiritual wisdom and supreme religious message. If I had to take the key-note and secret of Asia, I should name it at once in a single word "Religion", using that great word in the sense of the realisation of the unseen spiritual world which moulds and fashions our human lives. The two personalities, who have left the deepest impression on human history, Gautama the Buddha and Jesus Christ of Nazareth, were both born in Asia. So was Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam. It is also a striking fact that has often been repeated that every great Founder of religion was born in Asia. For there is not a single universal religion in past human experience that did not spring from Asia.

India stands in the very centre of Asia, as one of its greatest countries ; and India is the home of many religious movements. There was one man born in India, to whom I have already referred, whose religious genius is only second to that of Christ, namely Gautama, the Buddha. He lived five hundred years before Christ, and taught men and women in those early days to forgive one another instead of retaliation ; to follow their conscience with pure minds and to sacrifice life itself for the good of humanity. Gautama, the Buddha, has not yet come to full recognition in world history. What he really did for our race is not yet understood. In the West, we have hitherto not learnt

fully how beautiful was his character and how great was his influence. Yet the whole of Asia, from western India right across to Japan, owes some of the best part of its civilisation and its culture, in the deepest moral sense, to Gautama, the Buddha. It was through his teaching of love and compassion, that one half of the human race became kindly, peace-loving, humane people, instead of turning to war, blood-shed and violence.

But India did not merely produce in the past one great religious and moral teacher like the Buddha and then stop exhausted. She is still fruitful in such genius and personality.

Turning aside to Africa, which at one point of Suez and the Red Sea is linked closely with Asia, we must remember that Egypt, which faces the Red Sea, has remained almost a part of Asia during the centuries and has been united with Asia in a hundred ways. Egypt has learnt the wisdom of the East and has been constantly in touch with the greatest spirits of the East. Thus Egypt itself is rather a highway between Africa and Asia than typical of Africa alone. Its geographical position is intermediate.

Africa itself is best represented by the dark races which inhabit the centre and south and west. These are still the youngest races of mankind who have their great future still before them. I have lived among the Bantus in East and South Africa and have received the friendship of the Zulus. Also I have lived in Uganda close to other African tribes. One thing has impressed me about Africa more than any other. I have also lived in West Africa. In all these visits I have found that the soul of Africa has come remarkably in touch with the rhythm of the universe. The African, who belongs to the youth of the world, is truly imaginative and emotional. He is filled with that throbbing impulse of the music in the world which is near to pain and joy alike.

The African soul is not dulled and dimmed by long sophisticated civilised usage. It is still in its freshness of early youth and it has an imposing future before it. Of all the continents in the world that I have ever travelled in—and I have travelled in every one—there is none which has given me such a sense of future possibility, of future greatness, of future gifts for humanity as Africa. Therefore, I have learnt deeply to hold in reverence the African people whom I have met. The importance of Africa in world history in the centuries which are still to come is as certain to me as the present greatness of Europe and the ancient grandeur of Asia.

Now I come naturally to my own continent of Europe. Here we have a continent which has given to the world, more than any other, its rational aspect. Asia has been immersed in divine mystery. Africa has dealt hitherto with childlike imaginations, beautiful and full of promise. But Europe has come down to this concrete world wherein we live, this solid world of fact, of reason and intellect. Europe has been solving problem after problem of this material earth concerning the nature of the universe in its rational aspect,—problems of science that had never been solved in any other continent before. That is Europe's greatest modern gift to humanity and it is still being offered with both hands in abundant measure.

Let me, for a moment, turn back to the furthest South and approach Australia, one of the newest continents to be explored, and one where the population is still so thin that there are hardly three people to every square mile who have all come from Europe. Australia has a fascination of its own, and it is already showing signs of what its future gift to the human race will be. It is working out the problem of the planned social and economic welfare of mankind ; how man and woman can live together without the awful burden of misery and poverty and war that exists in every other continent. It is seeking to show how a whole united area of the world of mankind can advance and progress together equally without any slums at all. To me, it has been a remarkable experience to go through city after city in Australia and to search through each and find practically no slum life in them. I was able to find working men living with all the comforts and conveniences of the richest men in other lands, and this was not in one city only but in every city and in the country districts as well.

It was a startling experience ; and it was so unique that I have not yet ceased thinking about it. There are dangers ahead—dangers of selfish exclusiveness. The White Race doctrine has an air of hostility and exclusiveness about it that other neighbouring races must in the end resist, as the world becomes over-populated. Nevertheless, in their own way, Australia and New Zealand are solving human difficulties which no other peoples have so nearly carried to a happy conclusion.

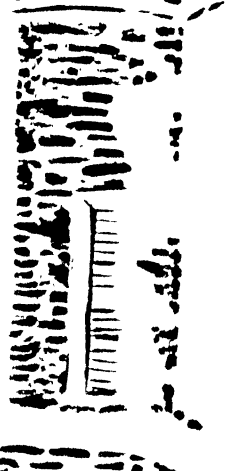
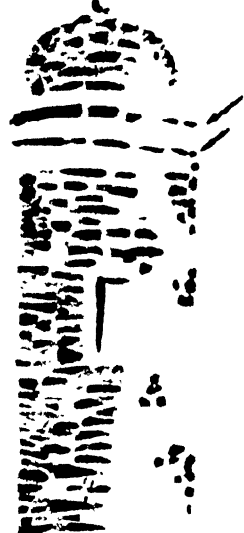
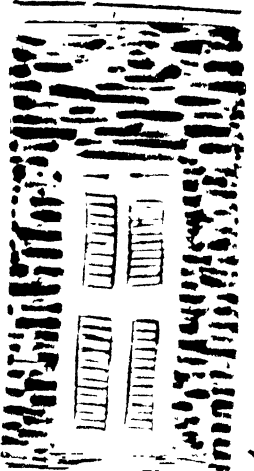
Last of all I come to what is called the New World—the world composed of the two continents of North and South America. What is the real achievement of North America ? Let me take that first and then I will go to South America last of all.

North America owes its own original modern civilisation to Europe. There were material civilisations before Columbus came, but they did not survive. This earlier population perished before the irresistible advance of the Spanish conquerors. Therefore, just as in Australia and New Zealand one of the European races is today working out a new destiny, so also in North America the European races combined have found a new field of human experiment. What then has appeared to me the one outstanding feature of North America as I have tried to explore and appreciate it ? How does it differ from Europe ? How does it also differ from Australia ? I have found this question very hard to answer. But at last it has seemed to me that North America is going to give us a new, creative and architectonic view of human life,—that is on one side material, based on solid earth, but stretching up to the skies in its ideal aspects. I have never forgotten the sight which first greeted me in the New World, when I opened my eyes outside New York Harbour and saw those soaring buildings reaching up to heaven and yet based on rock as firm and as strong as the eternal mountains.

South America, I have left to the last. There can be no doubt left in my own mind, that it stands for racial equality and racial fusion. Amid much that has been crude and reactionary, in its past history, there has been this one factor which has stood out like a beacon pointing the way to a weakening down of barriers of colour and race in the future when all humanity shall be one.



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



INDIA AND CHINA :

Their union through Buddhism

Kshiti Mohan Sen

NOT to know one's own self truly is indeed a misfortune ; for ignorance is always dangerous, and ignorance of self most of all. But to achieve a state of sober self-enlightenment our own unaided efforts are not sufficient ; we need the help of some outside agency. This latter, we may compare to a mirror which must be used for finding out what we look like. If the mirror is not sufficiently plain and clear, the reflection of our face will stand distorted in it. Hence the instrument through which we may really complete our knowledge of ourselves can be nothing other than a good friend. It is through the mirror of his heart spoilt neither by self-interest nor any other sordid motive, that we may know our own selves in a proper manner.

For the history of their own culture the Eastern countries are nowadays to depend considerably on the Western peoples ; the patience and industry displayed in this subject by scholars amongst the latter are worthy of great admiration. But a few questions may be asked here. Does this mirror always keep sufficiently clean and smooth to reflect the true picture we want ? Does it not occasionally allow itself, in spite of its best features, to be distorted by the bias of motive and interest ? And should we continue to depend on this appliance which may often be defective ? To our great regret we cannot give to this question answers that will be flattering to the appliance. The relation between the East and the West is, at present, certainly not very much of love and friendship. All this has spoilt the great chance of mutual understanding which might have borne unique results. We cannot help wishing that things had been otherwise.

We may, however, still try to see if we can yet find a friend who will help us in discovering ourselves. I believe such a friend exists in China whose relation to India in the past is a matter of great pride for the peoples of both these countries. So much about outside help. We should not, however, lay all the blame at the door of the defective outside agent. The defect of our own vision should also be given its

due share of censure. Our own biased vision may stand in the way of our knowing India properly. A real danger occurs when our prejudice and narrow outlook seek to discover in India an image of our own creation and identify the ancient Indian culture solely with the activities of the Vedic or Indo-Aryan people. We shall discuss here this altogether distorted view and try to discover the powerful forces which throughout her long history have gone to develop India's best ideals and traditions which have never ceased to find admirers and votaries in the world.

The specialists are almost unanimous nowadays in holding that India had a culture vast and manifold even before the Vedic or the Indo-Aryan people entered this land somewhere about 2000 B. C. Along with this fact must be remembered that other and different races entered India in later times and made the land their home. Thus in the investigation of the history of the religions and spiritual experiences of the Indian people we are to come across traces of different strata which belong to different races and times. The history of Indian religion is in striking contrast to that of the invasion of Australia and America by European culture, which did not stop till it practically killed the local culture and religion, and, sometimes, the entire population. Never do we meet in Indian history with any such attempt to exterminate the old heritages of a people. It may be that such a thing was not possible or it was not necessary at all ; but it must also be admitted that the motive for such action was wanting in the ancient Indian culture which never did crave for a dead uniformity, a love of which seems to have characterised the spread of Christianity by Europeans. Before the zealous advance of their religion in different lands the older cultures and religions had to vanish without leaving any palpable traces, and the growths, in later times, of acute disorders have thus been averted very effectively. Nothing analogous to this has happened in India and it is for this reason that we are nowadays face to face with various social and religious problems which can be and are utilized with advantage by parties whose interests are hostile to the best aspirations of India.

Even before the coming of the Vedic people, religious forces, one after another, came to India from the outside but they did not try to annihilate one another. On the contrary they lived together as neighbours. Many were the religions and cultures which flourished side by side and bestowed on Indian civilisation a wealth of culture, unique in variety, broadening the religious mind of her people.

The fact that various cultures, together with their peculiar religious ideas and practices, have met together in India, has made the land a very suitable place for the study of comparative religion. But this situation, unfortunately, is not at all favourable to the growth of political power. Yet we find throughout her history India generously giving shelter to all religions that came within her borders. It cannot be said that there was any weakness at the back of it. For in most cases her hospitality was sought when the guest was in an extremely helpless condition. For example, soon after the rise of Christianity, at a time when it could scarcely dream of any political backing it enjoys at the present day, there came to southern India some Christians who were cordially and hospitably received, though India has had a strange reward for this act of goodness. For, a school of western scholars is now resolved on proving that all the best and most beautiful doctrines of Indian religious systems were the gift of these new-comers.

When in the name of Islam, plundering hordes of Arabs swooped down upon Persia and tried to make an end of the old religion of the land, a band of fire-worshippers, the forefathers of our Parsees, came to India and found a ready asylum. For centuries India has cherished them in her bosom like her own children. Even if some Parsees do not care nowadays to recognise their debt to this land of their adoption, India can never be said to have been found wanting in her duty to them.

A similar story of India's generosity towards foreign religions is met with in the history of the Jains. The wife of Vastupala, famous equally in Jain legends and history, caused shrines to be built for the adherents of different religious sects even when they were not Jains. Among these were not only seven hundred Brahmanic temples but also eighty-four mosques. Now, all this favour was shown to Islam when as a political power it was yet insignificant in India. Yet in what vandalic manner the Turkish kings, professing Islam, treated the followers of different Indian religions, every close student of Indian history knows.

But to return to our subject, when the Vedic people came to India the older religions and cultures of the land began to assume, as a result of its contact with this new force, various novel forms. Even in the absence of any direct evidence, we can make such an assumption ; for had there been no influence of the pre-Vedic cultures the civilisation of the Indian Aryans could never have attained the unique

development we witness in historic time. There are Aryans outside India, but Indian Aryans differ from them all in possessing a number of religious ideas and spiritual achievements to which the former were strangers. And, besides this, among Indian Aryans of later times we find some wealth of ideas and achievements which we do not find among the early Vedic Aryans.

All these phenomena cannot be explained by postulating a course of natural development. For in later time came in certain ideas and practices which were against the spirit of the Vedic religion. On a close observation of the latter we find that the Vedic people have for a long time tried to shut out certain things which were never allowed in the vicinity of their sacrificial circle and which have lived because they have lived through the common people and their speech (*prahrita*).

Besides this we see that the germs of these developments are still lingering in one shape or another, among the non-Aryan tribes, and all this gives us ground for our belief that the great pre-Aryan share in the making up of Indian culture is not purely hypothetical. Recent discoveries in Harappa and in Mohen-jo-daro supply corroborative evidence. It is among these archeological finds, placed by specialists in the third millenium before Christ at the latest, that we find the evidence of the existence of Yoga and allied practices. Thus it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain our old idea about the pure Indo-Aryan origin of Indian culture.

In the earlier part of the Vedic age which represents a purer Indo-Aryan culture we do not meet with some of the richest developments of Indian spiritual ideas which appear later. Few are aware of the fact that concepts with which we are so familiar in our daily life and practice—concepts like *atma*, *paramatma*, transmigration, liberation, *nirvana*, *yoga*, renunciation, non-violence, etc. are unknown to the early Vedic literature. Love, devotion and compassion, that we find referred to, are of so very ordinary kind that they might well be regarded as quite different from the same names which occur in the Upanishads and the later parts of the Vedas. It may be that these later developments are not totally due to pre-Aryan influence and were the product of a clash and synthesis of the two cultures; in any case an exclusive Indo-Aryan claim to them may no longer be maintained. With all our effort to recognise the proper share of the pre-Aryan contribution to the evolution of Indian culture we can not claim that only the choicest things came from that source. Quite a great part

of the popular view on religion, together with what we may call various superstitious beliefs, is to be traced to pre-Aryan culture ; for example the worship of Sakti and other goddesses, the different *tantric* rites, phallus worship and the worship of animals, trees, rivers and bathing places surely came from that source.

As the sacrifice formed the core of the Vedic religion the sacrificial ground was the place around which the Vedic culture and education flourished. On the other hand the pre-Aryan people had their *tirthas* or bathing places as their centres of culture and religion. All this was due to a belief in the sanctity of water which existed in India long before the Aryans came and an evidence of which is to be found in the relics discovered in Mohen-jo-daro.

Thus from a very remote time we meet with the followers of the Vedas as well as the Tairthikas who were connected with *tirthas*. Buddha, Mahavira and other great teachers belonged to the latter group and were opposed to the teaching of the Vedas. The Jains call their teachers Tirthankaras (makers of *tirthas*) and they identify their *tirthas* with the highest spiritual doctrines which are notoriously free from the Vedic teachings. Masters of Indian philosophical systems like Kanada and Kapila have been called adepts in such heretical doctrines.

According to the Vedas the gods are superior to man ; while the Tairthikas are for giving the highest attention to man, to the exclusion of the deities. The highest aim of the Vedic people was the ideal of a house-holder's life in this world and pleasures of a heavenly life in the next, while the ideal which inspired the Tairthikas is a life of renunciation here and final liberation (*nirvana*) or complete cessation of worldly desires hereafter. They believed that the true religion began with practising the control of our passions and this latter led to the realisation of perfect poise and harmony within oneself. An exposition of the method establishing this harmony has been given by Gotama Buddha and other great men like him. In fact Buddhism is not an accidental phenomenon in the religious life of India. It was the good old principles, like love and non-killing, that Buddha gave life to by his noble character and career. Viewed in this light Buddhism is organically connected with Indian tradition, which in its best aspect, gave emphasis to things human.

Thus in later Vedic time Indian religion began gradually to come under the influence of yoga, bhakti and other kinds of mysticism which are already manifested in the older Upanishads, and a very

marvellously rich development of Indian religion followed. The richness of ideas in a culture presupposes a great variety of them. But variety in this matter led to the growth of different schools of opinion, the result of which was not altogether happy. We wish very much that a synthetic outlook could discover the essential unity among the apparently different opinions, but due to some weakness inherent in human nature it became otherwise : some of the schools were discriminated against and were considered inferior. Thus variety brought in strange inequality. It was in this manner that followers of some of the schools gradually came to be out-casted. But India did not accept this condition without a protest. The mission of her great men like Rama, Krishna, Buddha and Mahavira has always been to unite all people by removing the artificial barriers of inferiority. To them only India pays an eternal homage and not to conquerors on the battle-field. Most of these great men were Kshatriyas (warriors) who together with the Brahmans (priests) enjoyed an intellectual life. Now some amount of intellectual life is necessary for getting at new truths and for accepting them. Thus compared with others the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas were favourably placed. But of the two groups the Kshatriyas had a better opportunity in this matter ; for unlike the Brahmans whose mind was prone to be narrowed down by the mechanical repetition of ritualistic practices, they had a mind disinterested and comparatively free. It was probably for this reason that as philosophers the Kshatriyas are found to be occupying the very front rank in the ancient history of India.

Surrounded on all sides by various pre-Aryan cults, which were followed by a numerically strong section of the people, the Vedic religion was in constant fear of being lost. Probably for this reason it was ever busy in defending its boundaries. Hence it became narrow and exclusive and had no chance of assimilating others. In contrast, the later religions which were characterised by yoga and bhakti and spiritual knowledge were inclusive and many outsiders had been assimilated by them ; for example, in Buddhism, Jainism and in the various sects of Siva and Vishnu, many alien people such as the Scythians, and the Huns had been taken in from a very ancient time.

This in brief has been the course of stratification in Indian culture. Let us have a more detailed view of the different strata. The Aryans came down to India to find already existing a great civilization of remote antiquity. A glimpse of this civilization, far superior to any thing of the kind possessed by the Aryans, is to be had

in the archaeological discoveries of Mohen-jo-daro which have revealed to our wondering eyes the traces of magnificent town-planning, roads, palaces, drains, sewers and reservoirs of water, highclass craftsmanship, jewellery, sculptural designs and the execution of human figures and of plant and animal life as they existed in the pre-Aryan India over three thousand years before Christ. We do not know whether the demon Maya of Mahabharata, the reputed builder of Yudhisthira's council-hall, was in any way related to the authors of this civilization. The wonderful description given in the Ramayana of Ravana's city Lanka, with its magnificent palaces, parks and other objects, seems also to carry us back to some rich pre-Aryan culture.

How was it that the pre-Aryan people enjoying a richer and superior culture succumbed to the Aryans? An answer to this is possibly to be found in the fact that the latter possessed horses and armours, which were unknown to these pre-Aryan Indians. In spite of their inferior numbers Aryans were well organised and were good fighters and thus they could win. Pre-Aryan Indians had to come under the influence of the conquerors' culture, but the course of the older culture could not be totally arrested and had its revenge later. It lived, and, silently and gradually, absorbed the culture of the Aryans who thus sustained a subtler defeat at the hands of the people they conquered.

The Aryans ascribed leadership to their gods while the pre-Aryan folk were for relying on man. Their heaven was placed in this world and not in the next. According to them, a heavenly bliss was attainable within oneself by the practice of self-control and quietude.

Possibly as a result of the synthesis of the two different views, man gradually came to realise Soul within his own frame and the Universal spirit within the entire creation. Realization in either case, however, glorified man, the contents of whose inner life were far superior to any heavenly wealth. As 'guru' (the spiritual guide) was to lead to the path of this kind of realization, he was deemed greater than a god. In fact the position of guru was unique. Thus in the present case gods were to stand below human beings. Even the Universal spirit which was but an abstract idea became gradually humanized into Paramesvara, and this humanization is to be noticed in the conception of Siva, Vishnu and the Adi-Buddha of the Mahayana Buddhism. There is no wonder that this human conception of the Divinity gave emphasis to practices of *bhakti* (devotion), *prema* (love) and similar other qualities.

We do not know what Buddhism was in its beginning, but as it spread through ages to different regions the followers of this religion became divided into many sects. This differentiation, however inconvenient to the modern student of its history, rebounds to the glory of the people who lived in those times and regions. For, any principle, if it is living, must adapt itself to its surroundings, and an absence of such adaptation must be attributed to its barrenness which is far from glorious. The man who keeps wealth and knowledge enclosed within a dead material case, without any chance of development, is scarcely worth the name.

The chemical analyst is concerned with inert objects but the biologist deals with life, and will handle only living beings. Those who like the analyst, interest themselves in the words of the Buddha in their pristine purity, will have to look for them in dead canonical writings, for in the hearts of the living people no such things will be found. As Buddha's principle of religion ingrained in Indian nature developed like living things and assumed various forms, the Vedic religion gradually came to be absorbed by them. This is but one of the many instances. New religions of popular origin very slowly overpowered the Vedic mode of worship. A knowledge of this fact, however painful to the upholders of the theory of Vedic origin of Indian culture, will appear natural enough when seen along with the biological phenomenon that one living thing eats up another. Though in our daily life we may invoke every now and then the authority of the Vedas, very penetrating researches will be necessary to discover any traces of those holy books in our present-day social and religious activities.

To return to the expansion of Buddhism, this Indian religion on its arrival in China gradually gave rise to various sects in response to the varied local conditions. Lack of such development would have been discreditable to the great and ancient Chinese culture which in that case might have been charged with intellectual and spiritual barrenness.

The present-day religion of India, in spite of its very slight Vedic colouring, is saturated with the spirit of Buddhism. Raja Rajendra Lal Mitra, one of the greatest Indologists of the last century, was the first man to hit upon this truth, but the great Brahmin scholar who has established this on firm basis of incontrovertible fact was the late Mahamahopadhyaya Hara Prasad Shastri. Writings of this eminent scholar and his followers on the Dharmapuja and allied subjects contain invaluable information on this point.

In 1924 while Rabindranath Tagore was in Peking, a deputation of Buddhists came to meet him at his residence in Tse Jah Hutung. Among them were great and leading Chinese, like King Su, Chang Wen Hsiong, H. T. Hsü, Tng Ben Chun, H. T. Li and others who asked the poet about the number of Buddhists in India. In reply the Poet said that Hinduism in its growth had absorbed Buddhism so that the latter existed equally among the modern Hindus. In fact the development of the Indian religion has been such that it would not be correct to call it either Vedic or Buddhist. The story of this development has its parallel in the course of the Ganges. Starting in quest of the source of the holy river, we come upon a streamlet which is very insignificant in itself but having been joined by various other streams it has gradually assumed the size of a big river. Now even the most orthodox among the Hindus are willing to accept the entire Ganges as sacred in spite of their clear knowledge of the various tributaries which feed the great river and make it what it is.

In Christianity too the same process of development has been at work. And this fact is very well known to students of Europe's cultural history. Most of the customs, rituals and festivals connected with Christianity are very scarcely connected with what Christ actually said and did. But some of the Western Orientalists in their treatment of Eastern religions are apt to forget these facts.

Just as the waters of the various streams after coming in contact with the Ganges no longer retain their own separate names and come to share the geographical situation of the great river, the various pre-Vedic and Vedic elements which came to the Indian religion could no longer retain their individual character and came collectively to be called Indian religion. As "Hind" means India, "Hindu" etymologically means Indian ; thus Indian religion is equivalent to Hinduism.

In its homeland too Buddhism has changed from age to age and has many sectarian divisions. This sort of change or development was inevitable. But the difference between the present-day Hinduism and the various Buddhist sects of those days could not be so sharp as the differences between those sects themselves. In China too Buddhism has naturally changed a great deal and it has divided itself into many sects, but the present-day Hinduism probably does not differ so much from the original Buddhism as the Chinese Buddhism does. Hence the Buddhists of China should have no reason to consider Hindus as belonging to a different religious faith. It has already been mentioned that a religion is bound to change according to time and

circumstances. Absence of such change reflects discredit on the people who profess that religion ; and the historian who fails to appreciate the inner unity in the apparent diversity worked by time and circumstances, does not deserve the name.

It can scarcely be imagined nowadays how much fighting and bloodshed characterised the relation between the different Christian sects of the middle Ages, made notorious by their Inquisition and similar inhuman institutions. But in spite of this some Christian writers, knowing full well that the Hindus and the Buddhists taken together will far outnumber the Christians, very cleverly try to forestall such a step by starting a discussion about the history of the various quarrels that took place in the past between the two great religions of Indian origin and conclude with an air of disinterestedness that the Hindus and Buddhists are too different from each other to be classed together. But they ought to know that the bitterness with which the various Christian sects fought each other throughout medieval Europe can scarcely be paralleled by any clash that ever took place between the Buddhists and non-Buddhists of India. The nominal conflicts that have occurred from time to time between them are to be compared with quarrels between different members of the family who are related in blood. And this kind of clash has no peculiarity about it, for different sects of the Hindus such as Saivas, Saktas and Vaishnavas and the adherents of different Schools and sub-schools of Indian philosophy too have often had quarrels among themselves, which were equally intense. In spite of these occasional instances of intolerance against one another's faith we find epigraphic evidence of different sects demonstrating benevolence towards their rivals, for example, we find inscriptions, recording the donation of a Saivite King for the building of Buddhist temples, grant of land for Vaishnava temples by a Buddhist monarch, the building of a Buddhist temple by a Vaishnava King ; instances of the building of Brahmanic and Islamic shrines by a Jain woman have already been mentioned. Can we gather any such instance from the whole of European history before modern time ? But this sort of mutual regard among the different religious sects was no uncommon thing in India which in modern time has developed an unfortunate spirit of antagonism among the different religious sects, due no doubt to the machinations of some interested groups.

Queer ideas about the Chinese religion are current in India. Even a very short stay in China has made us conscious of the great in-

justice we have been, for a long time, doing to a great people. Similar has been the case in China with regard to India and her religion. But one very hopeful aspect even of this very deplorable situation is that it is only the educated persons (who gather their informations mostly from printed things) and not the common people of the two countries, that entertain wrong ideas about one another. Hence it may be hoped that if some lively intercourse between the two countries is established and carried on in proper manner then all the misunderstanding will be a thing of the past. It may be mentioned in passing that oriental peoples have mostly very strange ideas about one another for reasons hinted above and our best efforts should be devising means for mutual understanding.

Indian teachers who in early times carried Buddhism to China did not consider it to be anything that could be isolated from India's culture, her philosophy, literature, various arts, crafts and sciences etc. It is for this reason that we see there many non-religious things carried to China along with Buddhism. The great Chinese people too did not care for their non-religious character and have very carefully translated and preserved many important works on these subjects and have improved upon the arts and sciences they received. This idea may not be very pleasing to our orthodox people, who will probably say that due to its contact with an alien environment the purity of Indian culture has been lost. But the historian of cultures will not listen to such silly things, for he knows full well that time-worn and rather devitalised culture can be strengthened only by introducing some fresh blood in the shape of a culture like that of the Chinese not too incompatible. Thus we have every reason to welcome back our Indian culture, now enriched by contact with the Chinese in their land.

If this culture had remained without any change whatsoever even after its long sojourn in a continent possessing a vast ancient civilization then it would have been a very deplorable thing indeed. Lack of any spiritual contribution from a country which was sanctified by such great teachers as Lao Tse, Confucius, would have been a puzzle indeed.

IBN 'ARABI : A GREAT MYSTIC

M. Ziauddin

IBN 'ARABI stands out from amongst the rest of Muslim Sufis as one unique in greatness of personality. It is difficult to give an idea of his peculiar greatness in a few words. To know him well one must first have a thorough acquaintance with the essential elements of Sufism with all its metaphysics. Among the multitude of saints that Islam has produced there is perhaps none who has left such a distinctive stamp on Muslim thought. He ranks foremost, not only among those who have founded original schools of Sufism, but also among those who through their personal spiritual experiences have brought Truth nearer to human life and understanding. Ibn 'Arabi tried to keep the truth of his realization in harmony with reason. Absolutely sure and definite to the last detail in the exposition of his spiritual understanding of things,—in which sphere he stands on the same level as the prophets of God,—he had, what most prophets have lacked, the fullest intellectual grasp of his position in the sphere of logic and common sense. With men of God, this has been rather a rare quality. A man thus constituted could not avoid being a blending of traditional faith and rank heresy. This blending is so perfect that you cannot distinguish the man of faith without setting off the great heretic in him.

Muhyi'l-Din Muhammad Ibn 'Arabi was born in 1165 A. D. at Murcia in Spain. In 1202 A. D. he visited Hijaz (Arabia) and lived at Mekka for a long time. He visited some of the important cities of upper Arabia and died at Damascus in 1240 A. D. He wrote about three hundred books. Two of these, The *Fatāhāt* and the *Fuṣūṣ* are particularly well known. This present account is mainly based upon the latter.

Ibn 'Arabi's system is known as *Wahdatul-wajudiyyah*, that is, the system which upholds the Unity of Being in Creation. The Creator and the created are essentially one. Creation continues to exist so long as God continues to know it in Himself.

Ibn 'Arabi divides religion into two classes : The Natural and the Artificial. What he considers to be the natural religion of "beings" is their surrender (*islām*) to the Will in Creation. Man's natural religion consists in his natural habits and inclinations which are always

in perfect accord with the Will working in them. Hence man's religion is his nature, divine or otherwise, and he is pious who is true to his nature as man.

Human nature is varied and manifold ; it comprehends in its fold the brute and the angel with all the intermediate gradations. Admitting all these gradations for practical purposes, this division would have to be considered an imposition of the judgment of our analytical mind on nature, which in itself is whole and undivided. Actions brutal or angelic are natural and just, as long as they are in obedience to the law of their nature, their original impetus. Therefore it is not possible to be unnatural and yet be religious. Since behaviour is always in obedience to the potential forces working in all creatures, they always act in harmony with the inner urge of their being—the law of their nature. Very often, as in the case of man, there are forces in the same individual which contradict themselves, and while these contradictory elements have the same tendency of appearing in action, which affords them the satisfaction of realizing themselves, yet those that actually show themselves in action, do so in exact obedience to the law which controls their entire being. Nothing ever occurs just accidentally. The law that rules all movement is "the creative will of Allah—on which are moulded the natures of beings," (Koran), who all follow their natures.

God's Will is the law. Action in accordance with that law proceeds, consciously or unconsciously, through the medium of beings. To act submissively is the vital tendency of all beings, their religion, as Ibn 'Arabi would like to put it. The creator materialises His knowledge by the working of the power of His will, in the objects He visualises into creation. Man realizes his latent powers through actions and is thus, simultaneously with God, creating his own nature, his religion. In so far as man tries to realize God through actions, bodily or mental, he, in fact, helps God to realize Himself. God's creative function is thus, indirectly, ascribable to man himself.

Artificial religion is the path that man strikes out for himself. Take for example the wilful renunciation of the world by a hermit. Ibn 'Arabi calls such an individual course artificial, not because it is actually an artificial one, (that definition would directly contradict his conception of the natural religion), but only because it does not conform to the universal rule of life ; it is destructive and cannot be conceived of as natural to man. Such a course is strictly individual and leads man to the negation of life and goes diametrically opposite

to the universal plan of action which God has undertaken to work out. However that might be, renunciation of life being a negative aspect of the Will that accepts life, Ibn 'Arabi has to admit it in the general scheme of the natural law of Religion. God may affirm Himself, he reflects, in the most negative gesture of His devotee. And when devotees of such exclusive ways of worship find the Divine revealed in their hearts, they naturally begin to extol their individual "path" of worship. Ibn 'Arabi says the followers of individual paths too follow the Will of Allah in their persons. Hence all individual approaches to Him, however unconforming to the traditional faith, are to be considered justified in the eye of the law of Religion—The Will of Allah.

This brings us to the consideration of the so-called lawful and unlawful actions in religion, the ethical consideration of the behaviour of man. As long as our ethical criterion for judging actions as good or evil exists, or as long as our utilitarian value of the useful and the not-useful exists, one must regard some actions as good and some bad. Religions ascribe virtue to actions that follow the commands of God as recorded in Scriptures, and sinfulness to those that do not. Ibn 'Arabi as a faithful believer admits actions to be good or bad as judged by the Koran or the verdict of the Prophet. If these two classes of actions are admitted, the principle of reward and punishment has to follow suit of necessity. Ibn 'Arabi admits all this, but the explanation that he offers is subtle and an original one. His explanation renders all evil actions finally as good, as meritorious. For, "The possibility of every action is potential," says he, "and every action can only reflect what is potential in it." (*Faḥṣ Ya'qūbī*). Meaning thereby that what is potential in human actions is the 'thought-force' of the energy that Allah has set to work in man and beast and stone. Possibilities of actions, governed by their ever-changing circumstances, which are metaphysically speaking, the 'thought-forms' emanating from His Will, only reflect in the mirror of time and space the details of His knowledge. There can be, therefore, no final standard for judging good and evil. The only standard that would work is the bent of the Will realizing itself in the Universe. As this Will happens to be eternally in a state of flux and evolution, man can have no hope of standardising the degrees of Good and Evil. Ibn 'Arabi thinks evil as necessary in this world as good itself. It is only God's mercy that descends through good as well as evil. "Evil in its own nature is pure and pleasant ;" says Ibn 'Arabi, "and in the sight of Allah evil is as good as good is evil. Where is that good, which cannot be turned into evil?"

His argument is: "Originally, the creatures as such being non-existent, what is apparent in reality is the 'self-expression' of Allah, revealed in the nature of the basic 'thought-forms' of beings." Will being responsible for all forms and actions, good or bad, Ibn 'Arabi says, "It is He Himself who blesses Himself and inflicts punishment upon Himself" (*Fa: ya'qabiyyah*). This is the only logical conclusion that can be drawn from the theory. *The Virtuous are as much slaves of their nature as the sinful are.* That good and evil natures exist by the sanction of Allah, and that the good and evil elements are equally natural to man, Ibn 'Arabi explains by describing the position of a God-sent reformer with regard to his disciples. He compares the prophet to a physician ; and just as a physician in the treatment of a patient tries to assist the vitality of the body in its efforts to resist and finally to eradicate the disease from the body, a prophet, like-wise, does only help his followers to recover their potential powers to act virtuously. And thus, the prophet in his task of reforming his people only submits to the will of Allah in nature, and does not impose anything upon humanity of his own account.

Retribution and reward, according to Ibn 'Arabi, are the natural effects of their causes, natural consequences of actions—'*aqibat*', that is, "what must follow necessarily." He defines religion as '*adat*', that is "habit", or "what reveals its natural content by repeated actions." Hence his conclusion that religion is the tendency of a being to return repeatedly to its original impetus, as does a part towards its whole by internal attraction. Recoiling back to the original source of emanation is the central tendency of all religion. But this is speaking relatively. No recoiling movement or devolution can, in any sense be applied to the Will. It knows no stepping back. What appears to be a backward movement to the original impetus in man, is in reality a progressive unveiling of the Truth in his mind. This progressive unveiling of the truth is an eternal fact ; and Ibn 'Arabi delights to reflect that every moment of our life we actually absorb God in our being, we acquire Him by letting Him "think out" the movements of our lives, we do occupy Him by calling on Him to solve our difficulties and fulfil our needs. This process, he says, is eternal, and it is easy to see that as individuals we can never realize Him completely.

As to our knowledge of God, we can only know Him as Creator and never as He is in His being. If we try to grasp Him through

our intellect, we will find that the elements of our thoughts and feelings that mould our mental attitude and form the body of our beliefs about God, are unceasingly in a state of flow, disintegrating and gathering together ever to evolve into newer forms of beliefs, from newer angles of views, with fresher combinations of ideas. To attain Him completely and once for all would mean, nothing short of complete disintegration of the basic metaphysical 'thought-designs' of our individuality. If you see in this state the *nirvana* of a Buddha, it contains all the essentials of *pralaya* too. While *Alghazzālī* believed in the possibility of man's being able to realize God in His Absolute Being, which he defined as *Ṣifr* (zero), Ibn 'Arabi denies it. He says: "If the qualities of our own being were removed from our conception of God, He would cease to be our God." We are bound to give Him the qualities of our senses, of our 'thought-images' and by qualifying Him thus with our "self", we make Him our God. That is why He cannot be known to us unless we know ourselves." Without the conception of the creature no creator can be intelligible to us.

"Whatever is not-God (*ma-shawā*)", says Ibn 'Arabi, "is His shadow." Whatever is not-God is nevertheless dependent upon Him. Another analogy is that of a mirror and the reflection in it.

Whatever is not God is like a reflection of Him absolutely bound up with Him. Hence, we are after the universe, so many reflections of Him. And He is in ourselves like a tree in its seed, like oil in the flame of a burning lamp, inseparably connected with Him. The shadow projected out of a thing indicates not so much the presence of the thing as its absence. Whatever is not-God does not in fact exist; it is simply the lack of existence marking out the range of non-existence. Is creation then the negative side of God? Is it a structure of shadows, a cosmic monument to the disappearance of God from the Universe? Does it stand there to negate the presence of the Creator's Will? Ibn 'Arabi does not believe the world to have come out of nothing. He finds that God Himself has descended into this creation, through His knowledge. Therefore, whatever is apparently not-God must necessarily exist in His knowledge, as part of His knowledge. In fact, whatever is not-God does not exist at all. We being the product of His knowledge are of the stuff of His Wisdom. We are His thoughts. "The truth of our existence is lodged in Him."

While expressing Himself, God divides His knowledge in

countless ways, limiting it in each conceivable limit. So much so that "wherever there is a thing limited it is He who is in fact limited. He pervades the creation in time and beyond time. Had it not been like this, existence would not have been perceptible to us . . . *Excepting His no other form is capable of taking a form.* He is the Witness and the witnessed. He is the soul in the Universe."

Unlike most Muslim thinkers, Ibn 'Arabi declines to admit that the creation takes place out of nothing. The world did exist in one form or another. Creation, according to him, takes place among the things themselves and not in God. What God does is that He wills the already existing possibilities of matter to make themselves manifest and matter obeys. Thus, Fate means that God willed a certain thing to appear. We must remember that this pre-existence of things was in God's knowledge as part of His attributes. When things were fated to take the form of the creation, they were to follow the natural limitations of their 'selves', that is, their Divine 'thought-forms' and the possibilities in them. God's knowledge of things is likewise strictly confined to the natural limits of things. The *Qadr*, that is, "the effective fate", is simply defining the time of 'events' in space. These events connected with things take place according to the conditions preconceived in the nature of things themselves, in their 'thought-forms.' Nothing is ever added to or subtracted from the original "ideas" of things. Thus fate means with Ibn 'Arabi the preconditioned state of objects as it existed in the knowledge of God. This state is termed "*sirr*", the innermost secret of existence.

Hence God's position with regard to His creation is clear, it is not that of a juggler. Ibn 'Arabi compares Him to a judge, who decides the fates of the contending parties according to laws that pre-exist his award of judgment. He decides in favour of the existing laws. God is thus exactly what Materialists call Energy, which evolves itself in its normal course. This energy would seem to correspond with the 'thought-forces' or 'thought-forms' of Ibn 'Arabi.

Conforming to the same rational interpretation of fate as law, Ibn 'Arabi applies it to our religious conception of morality. Basing his judgment on the Koranic verse: "And Allah is on His straight path, guiding all things as He leads them by their foreheads"; he declares, "there is no possibility for anyone to go astray. None ever goes astray, none is ever cursed by Him." Another argument to the same effect is also quoted from the Koran. "His mercy and bliss compasseth all." Allah being "on His straight path", the Universe is ever in motion,

nothing stands still even for a moment. There is in fact no path but the one He treads on. Who can then have the audacity to go astray ? Which way would one go astray ? "His Face is whichever way you turn" (Koran). It is He who leads sinners on His straight path that leads to sin.

Yet the light that leads astray
Was light from Heaven. (Burns)

All this follows as logical necessity, Ibn 'Arabi does not shirk the consequences. Even when he ascribes sin to the sinning nature in man, he does not forget to ascribe virtue also to the virtuous part of human nature. And then both these aspects are said to be essentially the basic 'thought-forms' as existing actually in the knowledge of Allah. Punishment and reward proceed from causes as their natural effects, thus 'willed' in the knowledge of God. In God's eye, both sin and virtue stand on the same ground. In Ibn 'Arabi's peculiar style: "By sending sinners to Hell, Allah sends them to the place where they come very near to Him (the cause); and thus Hell undergoes a transformation for the sinners ;—owing to what they have deserved, they get the pleasure of coming in the proximity of Allah, for they were sinners and criminals". What the sinners thought to be "Hell, was in fact the distance they had conceived between themselves and their Lord." To be quite clear on this point, he proceeds: "And Allah has not bestowed this pleasant and high state on them as His favour, no, they have acquired it through the 'truth of their selves' (*haqā'iq*) and through their deeds which they had performed ; and they had been on their straight path of action, for their foreheads were directed by the hand of that Master who has that quality (of guiding). And these people had not got that way of their own accord. They were led that way by force—till they reached the very "proximity of Allah," (*Faṣṣ Hūdīyyah*). This proximity in Koranic terminology signifies the highest bliss.

The sinners and the virtuous are both blessed by Allah, by returning straight to Allah, as He declares in the Holy Koran : "All things return to their origin". As the origin of all things is Allah Himself, every thing is blessed by returning unto Him.

And men are two kinds : those that know their path and know their destiny too ; and those that are ignorant of their goal. Their path is one ; it is the one that the Will has forced them to walk on. "They know the Truth who see that God Himself is the path ; for in truth men do walk in Him ; and what is more He alone is 'known.'

He is the Wayfarer. The creation is nothing other than Himself." "Now then", says Ibn 'Arabi, "consider the nature of the truth of your 'selves', and thereby realize the nature of your path." With Ibn 'Arabi, *kāfir* (the heretic) is only he who does not see Him. The principal cause of our ignorance is the extreme nearness of Truth to us. Ignorant is he who would know Him later.

Ibn 'Arabi, as must be clear from what I have said above, believes in a personal God. He identifies God with the "conception of the believing individual" ; beyond that God is ever unknown.

Every one believes in a God after his own heart. And a few also assert Him by apparently denying Him. In the heart of the believer God reveals Himself in the form dearest to him. Ibn 'Arabi says, "if He were to reveal Himself in a form unknown to His believer, His believer would flee from such an unfamiliar 'self-expression' of his Lord. And his turning back from such a spectacle would be quite in keeping with usual standard of human behaviour. For this refusal to acknowledge the strange God indirectly means respect shown to the God of his belief. A believer does not believe in a God other than the one he has framed in his heart. *Hence our Gods are the products of our minds (nafs)*. That is why the Sufi is one who tries to get at the universality of knowledge ; he must have a view of all the various conceptions of Godhead as they are reflected in the 'self-knowledge' of Allah" (*Faḥḥādīyyah*).

The individual, confined within his own mind, can only grasp a small part of the manifold beliefs that exist. Is it possible for an individual to realize the totality of beliefs ? Ibn 'Arabi himself denies the possibility of it in this world, when he says that, "the Day of Resurrection would be the Day that would present such a spectacle," that is, every body on that Day would be able to see the other's "faith-forms" of the Truth. However that might be, what he considers very important is that we must guard ourselves from the danger of excluding our God from the various different conceptions of God that others have. Our conception of Him should never be confined to a single form, because His is an eternal role of "self-expression." He is ever exceeding the limits of His self-expressions. "Guard yourselves," writes the Shaikh Akbar, "from denying Him in forms other than that of your own creed, that you may not lose the greater good ; for, otherwise, you do lose the proper understanding of the Truth. *Truth is never confined in any one form of belief.*" Among the conceptions of the creator, the perfect man must needs occupy the position of a princi-

ple that controls all its different branches and finer details, realizing at once the essence of the principles of all faiths ; for God is ever so much beyond the limits of a single faith. If we try to absorb Him through our mental efforts we will at once discover that the elements of our thoughts and the light of our spiritual sense that go to make up the sum of our belief in Him are unceasingly in a state of flux, expanding, breaking and building up into newer forms. To attain Him completely means simply the complete absorption of the individual in Him.

The man who does not limit himself to any particular conception of the Deity realizes Him in a greater number of forms, in which He moulds Himself. Allah reflects Himself in His Creation in an unending flow of forms, never exclusively confining Himself to any particular object or thought. The seer's knowledge of Him has to be of necessity progressive. Creation is ever evolving, "with each breath the self-same existence changes into a new one. Allah reveals Himself continuously and never is His 'self-expression' repeated." (*Faṣ Shu 'aiba*).

Allah has so willed that our ideas about the God-head are unending in their variety, ever developing into newer conceptions. In such a condition of things it is not possible for even the most ridiculous of beliefs to go absolutely wide of the mark. "It is thus fated," says Ibn 'Arabi, "that no one should ever be able to worship any but Allah. Every one of His 'self-expressions' has a form and is adored by a devotee." (*Faṣ Hārānī*). Of the Gods man has conceived and worshipped, Ibn 'Arabi is of opinion that Desire is the greatest and the most vital. It is the greatest of the universal forms of His self-expression." Mankind worships this God with a zeal which no other God has ever aroused. None is ever tired of adoring and offering his sacrifices to it. Ibn 'Arabi considers that, as our knowledge of the objects of our desire and hope progresses at a tremendous speed, and is ever evolving towards deeper depths and higher flights we are ever getting nearer the Truth, nearer our God. As we marvel at our success and wonder at the discoveries we make we adore our God. Seated in our hearts, He goes on revealing Himself, ever filling us with wonder and the mystery of His truth. If we had no desires, God never would have been worshipped at all. Desire shows us our way to God. Desire is that dynamic power lodged in our hearts that launches us into the sea or His Being (*Faṣ Hārānī*).

The desire for woman in man is great. Man loves her as he

loves himself, and so does woman love man. To put in Ibn 'Arabi's style, both are fated to love each other. The relationship of man to God, appears to Ibn 'Arabi the same as that of woman to man. It is through God that man and woman love each other so passionately. "Love between man and woman," says Ibn 'Arabi, "is complete because it is love by soul and body." When man sees his God in woman, it is in fact a view of His God reflected through his own person in woman. *"And God's reflection in woman is complete in the sense that in her alone is God viewed both as the Creator and the created."* The vision of the Creator which is conceived in female form, Ibn 'Arabi declares to be more complete than the abstract vision man may have in his own mind. Because, *"the Creator's vision can never be complete if it does not take account of the feminine principle in the Universe."* Woman stands to man in the same relation in which Nature stands to God. Man's attraction towards woman corresponds to God's attraction towards Nature. Man loves to enjoy the desires of his heart, and through this love he loves the object of his desire. If he were to know whom he loves and who enjoys in him, that moment he will be a perfect Man. Man's vision is blessed by his love—the light of Divine desire simply dazzles him. (*Faṣ Muḥammadiyyah*).



*FAREWELL, MY FRIEND !

Do you hear the rumbling of Time's chariot running along
crushing the darkness—

which in its agony shrieks out the stars ?

By the ruthless rush of its wheels, my friend,

I am whirled away from you to a cruel remoteness.

I feel like having been driven across diverse passages of death
and flung up at last on the hill-top of an alien day-break.

The familiar self of mine is torn into shreds

and thrown away by the speed-born wind

leaving no track behind for you to retrace and gather it again.

Then farewell, my friend !

May be some moments will arrive of lonely leisure

in the season of fading flowers and falling leaves,

when you will come upon some remnant of my being

in the corner of your paling remembrance.

May be like yesternight's exhausted lamp

it will still offer its flickering light to your dusk,

or vaguely appear to you like a figure of dream the name of which
is lost.

Yet, not a dream, for it is the truest of all truths that conquers
death—

it is my love.

I leave for you this changeless gift of mine while I am carried away
by the ever-shifting tide of time—

Farewell, my friend !

Nothing you have lost in losing me.

For may it not be possible for you to gather

some clay from my mortal stuff

and mould out of it the image of an immortal divinity

the meditation of which shall not be soiled by the taint of the actual,

or a single blossom from your offering

outraged by the assault of greedy passion ?

I shall no more be there to adulterate the vintage of your dreams

* A translation by the poet himself of his own poem making up the concluding portions of 'শেষের কবিতা', his own novel.

with my own longings soaked in tears ;
and if ever you create a vision in your mind
it will be free from all weight or consequence :

Farewell, my friend.

Do not grieve for me.

My cup of life is not broken to pieces ;

it still waits for its fulfilment

and it shall be my ceaseless endeavour to fill its vacancy.

I know of some devout soul who keeps watch for me in suspense,
who gathers flowers under the full moon for that bereaved time
when night grows dark round me,

who can accept me in an all-forgiving graciousness
through my insufficiency,

and I shall feel content when I surrender myself to him.

But with him my bounties will drip day by day in trickle,

and the favoured moments will slake their thirst

in slow gradual measures.

While what I have given to you is given once for all without stint,
over which you have your boundless dominion of ownership.

O my incomparable lover, my princely giver,

whatever I gave you was of your own giving,

even as you have accepted, I am beholden to you.

Now, my friend, farewell !



ABSTRACT ART

Nandalal Bose

IN response to the queries of some of our students I venture to put forth these few reflections on Abstract Art.

Let us, first of all, understand whether it is possible to paint a concept abstracted from the object without availing ourselves of its form, or forms pertaining to the same.

When we compare two different objects, say, the lotus-wand to human arm, we hint at a certain similarity between the "abstract" aspect of the one to the other. In this manner we may come to feel the abstract nature of the lotus-wand ; but to represent it without the help of some sort of form would perhaps be impossible.

Oriental artists in particular had devoted themselves to the representing of all manner of abstract concepts through the medium of "form", until they almost succeeded in capturing the formless itself. But lately a school of modern European painters are endeavouring to create impressions of particular natural phenomena independently of the forms attending on the same. There are some indeed who recognise the limitations of "form", but this particular school of the ultra-moderns aim at giving definite shape to the formless and the abstract, perceptible to our senses and yet dispensing with "form". If they succeed in their endeavour, they will have achieved a miracle. If they succeed in giving form to the speed of a horse without representing the horse, or if they succeed in portraying music, they will extend our empire over the impossible.

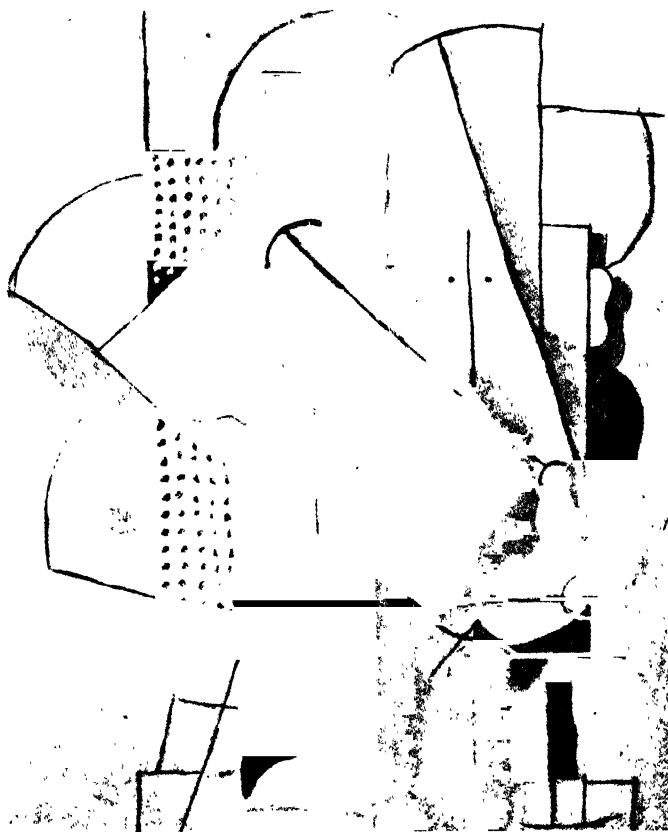
But then mere motion has in itself an element of rhythm, and there is a harmony in contours which can perhaps be shown by deft lines and the play of colours. We may take architecture and carpets as examples. But here too we can never be sure where exactly their artistic excellence lies, nor can we say what exactly they stand for. It appears to me that creators of such art draw most of their inspiration from the shape, character and harmony of the visible objects of Nature, however subconsciously such inspiration may work.

If the artist wants to represent an idea, otherwise inexpressible, by the help of lines and colours, he may as well borrow the form too of the visible objects of nature, which are, after all, constituted



STONE HEAD OF BUDDHA
(The Indian mode of approach in Abstract Art.)

Sarnath



HEAD OF A MAN

TÊTE D'HOMME

MANNESKOPF

1914

(The Analytic mode of approach in Abstract Art.)

of lines and colours themselves. Only he must not take more than a mere hint from such objects. So that we find there is not much difference from our point of view between the artistic creation of one who avails himself of the forms of objects as in nature and of him who invents his forms by re-arrangements of line and colour. How both of them achieve equally successful results is what we cannot fully explain. Those who claim to explain the inner significance of a work of art merely indulge in intellectual exercises. A picture should interpret itself. We may draw pleasure from it but to explain its subtleties in words is hardly profitable.

The fact is that all good art appeals to us as a whole. Lines and colours have all been assimilated into creating a single impression or a single rhythm, which will allow no division into mere parts. They are attuned to the harmony inherent in the picture, in keeping time to which they have their direction and play. That is why the artist oftentimes has to exaggerate and elaborate certain points and curtail others in the interest of a single unified effect.

To the oriental artist a picture is like a key which opens the door to the world of concepts. A picture to him is not merely a thing to be seen; it acts as a sort of guide to a region where words are helpless.



A SONNET

Let me recount to thee life's myriad boons :
A being full of glories sudden-paled,
Time-linked to clouded suns and broken moons,
And through enormous shadows darkly trailed.

Dream-solitudes with funeral fires ringed
Round in a deep unbroken toss and leap,
A soul of countless wanderings and winged
Only for flight across slow realms of sleep.

Yea, these are boons, indeed, of high account
Significant with riches that reach
Heavenly intensities and lastly mount
Up to a hush unsung by song or speech.

Rung upon rung of loneliness I climb
Towards the Timeless veiled by lonely time.

Harindranath Chattopadhyaya

SHARAKU

Yone Noguchi

SHARAKU appeared and disappeared unexpectedly,—like a comet in the dead of night. What artistic training made him bear the fruits of his now famous theatrical portraits, and what made him retire from the world of block-engraving, is a question that teases and baffles our imagination.

The psychology of creating an artistic vogue always follows, I think, the customary rule that the creator has first to offend people. Sharaku gives his figures a little side-lock like a sparrow's wing on their newly-shaven green crowns. He draws the strangest eyes like the snail's round shell or a fish-hook placed upside-down. The mouths of his subjects are straight and form a distinct contrast with the eye-brows and the musical instrument he fashions in his symphony of black and white plays a devil's nocturne. If it is true that nature imitates art, many husbands of his time, I am sure, must have thought their wives' eye-brows looked as rhombic as those of Hanshiro or Tomisaburo in his prints, and many wives must have been frightened, as with Ryuzo's Ukiyo Matabei or Ebizo's Kaikoku Shungyoja, at the height of their husbands who almost reached the ceiling. Doubtless Sharaku was largely successful in his creation of a new fashion through offending one's sense of delicacy ; but having missed the final victory as an artist of fortune, he drew back from the line of battle. He reminds me of one who, though he had run up at a breath as high as the eighth station of Mount Fuji, could not attain its summit in the storm.

The prints of Sharaku were all made during the time from the fifth to the eighth years of Kwansei (1793-1796) ; I think that Ebizo's Kaikoku Shungyoja, a pilgrim wandering about the country, at the Miyakoza theatre in 1796, is his last print. Sharaku worked in the front rank only three years or a little more. I imagine that people of Yedo in the early Kyowa era, that is, a few years after Sharaku's retirement, might have been saying: "There was a fellow called Sharaku. He comes now to my mind, a funny print-maker who drew actors in the most atrocious fashion. He must have offended them ; but they are happily released from this nightmare now that Sharaku has

disappeared. Where is he these days, and what is he doing for a living ? Well, that is not my business." It is not difficult to believe that whatever general interest there was in Sharaku was soon buried in oblivion, and people ceased to think of him. People in general know how to court and truckle to the arts of their times ; but true criticism is a thing beyond their reach. Irrespective of age or country, art when it is truly good, has to wait many years for final acceptance.

It is probable that Sharaku thought he was making his actors look as real as possible ; but our admiration for him lies in the very fact that he was never a photographer who could only present reality as a fact. See how Oniji's Sadakuro raises his inverted eye-brows ! See again how his big nose bends down as if in search of dissipation, and how violently his mouth draws one horizontal line ! Who knows that Oniji had such a wonderful face as Sharaku has depicted ! Sharaku expressed more than Oniji's reality simply because he added an artistic effect, an effusion of his own peculiarity, to the actual fact of the actor himself ; Oniji was only used by Sharaku as a medium to express one aspect of artistic effect. No one would ever forget the Hosoban print, "Yonesaburo Matsumoto" when he had seen it ; it is the picture of a woman impersonator who carries a little wooden stand with a wine cup and bottle. I once commented on it saying: "It was William Blake who saw a wonderful symmetry in the lion. If he had ever seen a picture like this, he would have been surprised to know that even a Japanese has such symmetrical beauty of body." This little full-length figure of Yonesaburo is, I believe, the most distinguished print ever drawn by Sharaku, for his artistic licence has recreated the actor most cleverly.

The total number of prints produced by Sharaku is probably not more than one hundred and forty or fifty ; all of them show how men and women can reveal an extraordinary pose when recreated by an artist. Among the Hosoban full-size figures by Sharaku, there are many examples of human bodies expressing a mystical moment of high feeling with sarcasm or contempt. See how indignant and wily looks Tomisaburo ! I am sure that the lines of the picture, almost metallic with repulsion, curving and falling perpendicularly, would ring loud if we beat them. Ryuzo Arashi is an old man red of face and arm, wearing a black costume and purple sash. Kiku-no-Jo Segawa in green and violet-like indigo blue is ready to dance with a fan in his hand. Komazo's Buddhist pilgrim, wearing a holy robe of grey but carrying a drawn sword, is going to strike his enemy. Kuro-



Oniji Otani as Sadakuro in "Kana Tehon
Clushin Gura." Sharaku. 1794.



The Fifth Danjuro Ichikawa as Kudo in "Gozen Kakari
Sumo Saga." Sharaku. 1793.

nushi played by Sojuro carries a bundle of brushwood and cherry branches on his shoulders, and rests himself leaning against a big axe. I see that there is no end when I begin to cite examples in which Sharaku recreated human bodies by a peculiar art, because I will have to mention every print he produced. But I cannot refrain from pointing out two more particularly distinguished examples in the climax of excitement, which are the full-size figures of Oniji Otani and Ryuzo Arashi ; the former in a green garment, covering his head with a towel and tucking up his skirt, is a personification of cynicism, and the latter in the role of Ukiyo Matabei, a picture of elasticity itself, stretches wide his legs and thrusts out his right hand dramatically. It is not only western critics who are pleased to hear some echo of Greek tragedy and recognise the shadows of giants in these pictures. The figures Sharaku drew, are all Japanese of the end of the eighteenth century, who, however, cannot be different from us in the twentieth century. There is no doubt that the actors in Sharaku's prints were endowed with most distinguished bodies, but I cannot imagine that they had such superhuman forms at the moment of charging upon God's impregnable castle in Heaven.

I think that an artist should be a magician who aims at the recreation of nature ; art in my mind is nothing but the expression of effect, resulting from the symbolising of reality. When Sharaku fixes a line or drop of pigment so that it never breaks the general effect of expression, I find him an ideal artist who can ask for the real appreciation of people in the future. Although Sharaku's works were made some hundred and fifty years ago, they have a power, strangely impressive and absolutely fresh, as of a thing made only yesterday. People who are content with prints of superficial arrangement like those drawn by Shunsho and his followers, or who gloat upon Utamaro's work of lyrical beauty emphasised with dissipation, will be outside the kingdom where Sharaku officiates with the tragic mien of the prophet. Like a prophecy, art when it is good and true, looks to the future for its true friends. I know that Sharaku may be too oily and offensive, and his dramatic revolt may give one a sense of restlessness and fear ; yet who knows but that such art, repulsive as it is, will be of great service when one has to turn one's actual life into a design with meaning? Sharaku was not recognised by people of his day, it is true. If one could approach him to-day, and say: "You are not an artist but a mountebank and a charlatan, your curiosity is heretical,—a witchcraft playing with ugliness in blasphemy

of God's beauty," I think that he would only smile a little, and then answer slowly: "I am sorry that I cannot reply to you with argument; besides, I know well enough that there is nothing more foolish than to defend myself. I only feel small if I am an artistic charlatan or blasphemer of beauty as you say; it is simply that I do not know what to do with myself, and am at a loss. What would you say if your human conduct were criticised only from the point of view of result? I know that you would be dead set against it. The question of life cannot be different from that of art. It is the very work of a critic of art to see the real condition of psychology in which an artist draws or paints; not the result he presented, but his motive is important. It is true that I may seem to you to be an artistic knave; speaking spiritually, I tell you plainly, I am not wearing a 'wig of one hundred days' or painting my face red as actors do on the stage. However my prints appear to you superficially, that is merely the result but not the motive of my art, the psychology of which only a true critic can understand. Even I myself cannot help the result that my work shows by accident; and I am no artist of popular taste with aim set on concrete results. The age changes: The art criticism of to-day cannot be that of to-morrow. What will people say about me fifty or a hundred years from now? Because of my dislike of defence, I am sorry that I have defended myself."

All great personalities know how to exaggerate themselves. Taiko and Napoleon exaggerated themselves. Fuji Mountain exaggerates herself in various fashions. Niagara Falls and the icebergs of the northern Atlantic are anxious to show their own idiosyncrasies by exaggeration. It is the licence of a great thing to see no shortcoming in exaggeration. When we see exaggeration in Sharaku's prints, we begin to appreciate them. Sharaku exaggerates the eyes of Hangoro or Ryuzo or Tomisaburo or Kiku-no-Jo. The noses of Danjuro and Oniji's Komazo are exaggerated. Sharaku exaggerates the hands and arms of Oniji as Sadakuro. But it is not right to cover Sharaku's art with the word of exaggeration, because we know that, when we select one phenomenon from all phenomena and place it in visionary circumstances of mind and gaze on it, we will often be surprised to see how strangely it gesticulates and what extraordinary forms it reveals. It may be that the eyes, nose and hands of actors first exaggerated themselves, and as a realist Sharaku saw them and drew them as they were. But when we see that their peculiar gesticulation was only meant to be seen by Sharaku, I cannot help wondering how great his



Kiku-no-Jo as the Dancing Girl Hisakata
in "Uru-u Toshi Meika no Homare."

Sharaku. 1794



Tomisaburo Nakayama as Ushikai
Ofude in "Otokoyama Oyedo no
Ichizuye." Sharaku. 1794.

power of inducement was ; then, am I wrong to call such an owner of charm an idealist ?

I always speak of the greatness of one's gazing power ; I know that, according to one's power of observation itself, phenomena change their own forms, large or small, square or oval. It is not too much to say that their destinies are in our gazing power. Therefore this power decides the value of artists. Sharaku was great in it. He drew the eyes of Tomisaburo, Hanshiro, Tsuneyo, and Ichimatsu almost rhombically, because at his command they turned a somersault. It is natural that the heavy wigs which woman impersonators have to wear, and the actual condition in which they have to smooth the wrinkles of their faces, make their eyes squint and seem strange ; but it was the mental condition of Sharaku, the artistic whim of his gazing power, that made them loop the loop. He will feel no pain, I am sure, if you call it a heresy of art, wretched paganism ; blame if there is any, should be laid to his gazing power which at once brings forth analysis, and develops into a reconstruction of reality.

An artist is nothing if he cannot reconstruct what he has seen ; to take square for square and egg for egg is the work of a tradesman or schoolmistress. The artist in my mind should be one who lives in the world of the fourth dimension. It is difficult to explain the greatness of Sharaku's prints to a person who has no affinity with him. The theory of wireless telegraphy cannot be told till a proper apparatus is ready. The previous question with the art of Sharaku is whether your mental apparatus is fit for it or not. Speaking in general, the possibility of art is often limited or restrained by lines and colours ; we find that they sometimes do not express anything at all. Artistic expression must not be superficial explanation ; I say that it should be a spiritual key with which we can open the door to the mystery of life. It goes without saying that there is no reason why an artist must draw things to their actual measure. Sharaku drew the eyes of Yaozo like those of a pondsnail, he gave Oniji an eye like a fish-hook upside down, because he thought that such a presentation was better fitted for his artistic purpose. It is under the jurisdiction of the house-builder, of course, to make this door smaller or that window larger.

"Tragic colours" are the words some western critic used, referring to those in Sharaku's prints. The meaning is not quite clear unless it refers to visionary colouring ; this critic may find in the prints some beauty of darkness that belongs to night. But I should say that there are no prints like Sharaku's for revealing the beauty of clarity under

seeming darkness ; the colours Sharaku used are akin to mystery. See Danjuro's half-length portrait ! What harmonious beauty of light red ochre and pale green which supported by the mica background, makes the actor, a gorgeously-dressed spectre or ghost behind the foot-lights, loom up most divinely. And see Omezo's half-length portrait in which you see such vermillion as is left when distillation has taken off all sediment ! If you imagine a cluster of ripe persimmons against the dark autumnal sky, you will understand something of the beauty of this print ; its purity is somewhat classical, but when it suggests some compound psychology running underneath, you will see that the motive is fresh.

Like other distinguished art, Sharaku's work is backed by intellect ; I mean that it is the result of deliberation which promises an eternal symmetry, transcending time and place ; it was not originated in improvised amusement or personal taste. Of course I do not think that Sharaku used intellect playfully to evoke people's curiosity ; if he was an artist of such low order, often irresponsible and always impulsive, the prints he produced would not be more than the toys of temporary fancy. Only an artist like Da Vinci, who refuses to allow sentiment and passion to sweep him away, is able to pile pyramids upon pyramids ; such a worker of artistic miracles owes much to the intellect that helps him to see things deeply. The holy temple of intellect admits only the person who is serious and can turn prayer into art. When I see that among Sharaku's prints there is almost no poor work except a few pieces that he produced at the end, I cannot help wondering what energy he exhausted in work ; nothing is happier for an artist than leaving no miserable thing to the future. Sharaku's prints that remain to-day were produced in some four years, that is from the fifth to the eighth years of Kwansei. I dare say that four years would be sufficient for any artist to finish up his life's work ; the length of time has no meaning, whatever, artistically. One has to spend many years in preparation before commanding a few years of his best work, and the rest of his life is to be given to repeating the work he created during his prime ; therefore the years of preparation or repetition are nothing but an appendix to the most important four or five years on which life depends. Sharaku is fortunate in that we have record only of his best work ; whether he was forced to retire from the world of prints or retired by his own choice, the fact that he worked only four years proved advantageous for him.

I said that Sharaku was a man of intellect, but I did not say that

he was not a man of imagination, because I know that, if imaginative blood, red and hot, had not run in him, he would not have been able to create such work as we see to-day. Into a mould which intellect made he emptied his vigorous passion at that right moment which would not come again ; all the portraits, half or full-length, which Sharaku cast into prints, are branded by the fire burning in his mind. Some western critic tries to interpret Sharaku's work as satanism, and finds in it a restless phantom wandering about in the night, or a wild sarcasm, almost mad, under cold wintry moonlight. Edgar Allan Poe opens "The Masque of the Red Death" with the following words : "The Red Death had long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its avatar and its seal—the redness and the horror of blood." If Sharaku had been a writer, he might have said of Oniji's Sadakuro. "The eyes of Sadakuro burned in a fatal fire. His nose trembled with dissipation and brutality. He was the Devil's symbol, doubtless, but had something which we could not hate ; his doings, bad in fact, were not planned intentionally." "Mona Lisa" by Da Vinci might be pointed out as a specimen of artistic passion cast in the mould of intellect ; I do not know if this strange lady was a wanton character, but the little smile that escapes from her narrowed eyes, is certainly mysterious and unique. In enigmatic expression Sharaku's Danjuro does not fall behind her ; see how like a dragon glaring in all directions, painted by a Kano artist, this Danjuro diffuses his mockery around !

After all I think that the great interest of Sharaku's work lies in his expression of double personalities ; I mean that the two personalities of the actors and Sharaku himself appear and disappear there by turns and stir up our curiosity. They are found so often joining their hands and embracing each other, like two lovers under the same umbrella, and sometimes fighting and shouting like husband and wife in a row with broom and duster ; the former sounds a song of harmonious rhythm, but the latter, of course, jars on our nerves. The half-length portraits of Tomisaburo and Komazo are specimens in which Sharaku's intellect uncloaks an inevitable mystery with a surgeon's knife ; when his sense of beauty worked cleverly and best, he did the full-length figures of Tomisaburo and Koshiro as Umegawa and Magoyemon and of Hanshiro and Hikosaburo as Ohan and Choyemon. Sharaku is often coarse, but spiritually, not without delicateness ; his audacious grit is wonderful. With a technique poorer than that of Shunsho and Kiyonaga and Utamaro, Sharaku created

something that they never dreamed of. We must thank him for a key to human mystery and a new world of artistic excitement.

A critic compares Poe with wine of strange colour or fantastic goldware or a complicated pagan dance or artificial moonlight or sweet poison. I do not see why we cannot apply such a comparison to Sharaku who is half demon and half God.



THE MATERIAL OF LITERATURE*

Rabindranath Tagore

TO write for one's own delight alone is not literature. It is sometimes poetically said that as a bird sings in the sheer exuberance of its joy, so is the production of a literary artist a mere act of joyous self-expression—as if the reader is only an eavesdropper ! I am not prepared to admit that the bird's song is not addressed to its fellows,—in any case that is not worth arguing about. But I do assert that the writer needs must have in prospect a set of readers. That is not to say that his work is artificial. The mother's milk is for the child alone, and yet its flow may well be called spontaneous.

Unuttered poetry, self-contained expression, are two unmeaning phrases that have gained currency in certain quarters. But to call a person a poet, who may be gazing at the sky in a rapture as silent as the sky itself, is like giving the name of fire to a piece of wood that is not alight. Poetry is expression ; what is or is not silently passing through a person's mind matters little to the others who are outside it. The same is the case with "self-contained expression" ; guests are not entertained by knowing what is in the kitchen : the dainties must be served to them.

We must therefore take it that literary work is not for the author himself ; and in that view must such work be judged.

We see in outside nature that all creatures are imbued with the desire to live in space and time, and the more they can thus extend themselves through their offspring, the more is their life fulfilled. Ideas, the creatures of our mind, have the same characteristic, except that they do not occupy space ; it is their desire to be felt or thought by other minds, for as long as may be. In what multifarious ways has this been manifest from time immemorial,—in intimations, languages, scripts ; cut in rock, engraved on metal, written on bark or leaves or paper ; with stylus, pen, or brush ; from side to side, or top to bottom, from line to line ! Why ? Simply in order that what one has thought or felt should live in the world of men,—what though house, furniture, and the body itself may die,—perpetuated from mind to mind, from age to age.

When some ancient, decayed manuscript is brought to light from

* Translated from the Bengali (Sahitya—1903) by Surendranath Tagore.

beneath the sand mounds of the Gobi desert, what a world of yearning looks forth from the undecipherable letters of its forgotten language, as of some once-living mind struggling to regain life in our midst. The person who wrote it is no more ; the abode of men in which it was written is no more ; and yet the thoughts that were so embodied in the hope of being nursed into new life from generation to generation, seem pleadingly to stretch out their arms to us.

The message that Asoka, the greatest of emperors, desired to proclaim for all time, he caused to be carved on rocks, expecting that these would endure as they were, on the wayside, repeating the burden of the words entrusted to them to the wayfarers of succeeding ages. And the rocks, ignoring the passing of time, have patiently borne his message. Emperor Asoka, his capital Pataliputra, and that glorious day of India's moral awakening, have alike departed, and yet the obsolete language of those words continues to appeal, as with dumb gestures, to all passers-by. But the message has been crying in the wilderness. Rajputs, Pathans, Moghuls have, in turn, wended their way past, the swords of the Mahrattas have flashed like lightning from one end of the country to the other, but none of these have paid any heed to those gestures. Eventually, from the little island beyond the seas, of which Asoka had never even heard,—where, while his words were being so carved, the Druids were also trying to perpetuate their own urge of worship in speechless pillars of stone,—came men who awakened his message from its stony sleep, and Asoka's desire was at length fulfilled,—the desire troubling his mind beyond all the concerns of his far-flung empire, that what he wanted and what he did not want, what he considered good and what he considered bad, should always be known to all.

Not that I mean to say that Asoka's edicts are literature. I mention them only as an example of one of the most insistent cravings of the human mind. The pictures we paint, the sculptures we carve, the poems we write, the temples we build, all this activity that has been going on in every country, in every age, means nothing if not the striving of the thoughts and feelings of men to attain immortality in the minds and hearts of men.

Ideas that are worthy thus to become everlasting usually differ in many ways from those that serve our every-day needs. Corn gives us annual crops, but if we want long-living trees, a different kind of seed has to be sown. The seeking of such immortality through literature is an endeavour ever dear to man's heart. So, in spite

of the exhortations of our patriotic critics for the production of informative literature, in spite of their complaints that novels, plays and poems are flooding the country, writers persist in writing for the expression of their emotions. For, while that which is useful may fulfil some present purpose, that which has no immediate use stands a better chance of permanent survival.

The object of scientific information, once it is propagated, is achieved and done with. Then new discoveries come and smother the old. That which was unattainable to the teacher a while ago, becomes a commonplace for the pupil. The truth that, when fresh, caused a revolution, ceases even to excite wonder when it becomes familiar. It seems surprising that what even fools admit so easily now, should ever have met with such strenuous opposition from the learned. It suffices us to be told once for all that fire burns, water is fluid, the sun is round, and so forth ; all that bores us if repeated. But emotions do not become stale by repetition ; to feel them over and over again does not tire us. The fact that the sun rises in the east, has ceased to interest us ; but the glory with which each sunrise fills our minds, has remained undimmed since the dawn of the human mind till to-day. Rather does an emotion, felt in ages past and transmitted to us through successive minds, become so much the deeper, and appeals to us all the more directly and intensely. That is why the literature that seeks immortality, has for its subject not knowledge but emotion.

There are also other differences. The subject matter of knowledge can be transplanted from one set of words to another. It is sometimes even made clearer by such subsequent change of expression. And the greater the variety of language in which it is told, the better is the object of its expression achieved. But such is not the case with emotion. Its expression cannot be separated from the form it originally takes. Then again, dicta of science have to be proved by analysis. But the emotion that is expressed has to be transmitted intact. Emotion is not a thing that can be explained, but it must be created. And in order to do so, suggestion and all kinds of literary devices have to be availed of.

Thus literary expression is seen to be the body of the idea. On the success with which the idea is established in such body, depends the merit of the writer ; on the quality of its body depends the value of the idea, the extent and endurance of its life in men's minds. Living things are necessarily dependent on their bodies ; they cannot,

like water, be poured from one to another. Body and life exist together as one and indivisible, to their mutual embellishment.

The idea, the subject matter, belongs to all men. If it does not occur to one, it will, in time, occur to another. But its particular expression belongs to the writer alone. What this expression is in the case of one, it cannot be in the case of another. So that the author lives in his expression, not in the idea or subject therein embodied. A water-reservoir consists of both the enclosing embankment and the water contained. But the water is not provided by man, it is always there. The merit of the engineer, which is his own, is in keeping it thus permanently available for the use of man. Similarly, a piece of literary work includes both the idea and the form of its expression, more especially the latter, which it is the glory of the writer to have provided as a means of making the former a joy for ever.

So we come to the conclusion that literature proper consists in the appropriation of an idea by the writer of genius in such a way as to make it enjoyable by all. Carbon is everywhere, in earth, water and air ; the plant, by means of its intrinsic power, first incorporates it into itself, and thereupon makes it fit for use by others. So is it the function of literature, first to make special the ideas that are general, and then by that very specialisation to make them of universal significance and value.

If that be so, then that which belongs to the domain of pure knowledge is of itself excluded from literature proper. For the truths that are to be apprehended by our intellect fight shy of the personal factor,—they must be seen in the dry light of reason, independent of individual predilection. Gravitation cannot mean one thing to you and another to me ; different minds and hearts must not be allowed to variegate it with the tincture of their own feelings. It is only those ideas which demand, for their expression, colour and tone and suggestiveness from the artist,—which are unable to gain entry into men's minds unless so re-created,—that are the material of literature. They can only live when given a fitting body by language and form and rhythm. They are not discoveries, not copies, but creations. Once they find their body they cannot be transferred into other forms, other conditions of life. The whole of such embodied idea is dependent on each of its parts. To the extent that any written production does not create such body, it fails as literature.



THE TEMPLE OF MAHADEO, KHAJRAHA

THE TEMPLE OF KHAJRAHA

Nirmal Kumar Bose

THE village of Khajraha is situated in the state of Chhatarpur in Central India. It lies more than sixty miles from the nearest railway station, but can be approached easily now-a-days by means of motor services. The country all around is not particularly hospitable. It is barren, the soil is hard and can hardly support a heavy population. But it is certain that at one time in the past, Khajraha was more densely populated than it is now. For next to Orissa, this place forms the most important centre of temple-building in the whole of northern India ; and this could not have been possible unless there were many men to make so much architectural activity either necessary or even possible.

Centuries ago, Khajraha was ruled by the Chandela kings of Jijhoti. The Chandelas never had any large empire to their credit, but they succeeded in extending their kingdom towards the north almost as far as the Jumna. Although their kingdom was small, yet the Chandelas were apparently greater patrons of the Five Arts than either the Andhras or the Palas.

In Khajraha, as it is now after eight or ten centuries of neglect, there are nearly thirty temples of large size, the highest among them being the one dedicated to Kandariya Mahadeva. Many of the temples are excellent examples of the architect's art, but the one named above surpasses the rest in artistic beauty. There are some scholars who consider Kandariya Mahadeva as the very best temple in the whole of north India. Although we may not agree with them on this point so long as Konarak is there, yet it must be conceded that there are good reasons for assigning the next best place in India to the temple of Khajraha.

Compared to Konarak, the temple of Khajraha is like an excellent example of lyrical composition. Konarak is great not merely because of the originality of design, but also because it is so stately in form and so catholic in its artistic sympathies. The architect's purpose was to say that the Sun-God, who is the ruler of all life, manifests himself through the nobler and more refined sentiments of humanity, just as he does through those which we may consider low or might associate with the animal world alone. Such a breadth of conception is always rare ; but what is more, at Konarak, the form of the temple, its arrangement of sculptures, the choice of subject, all march in perfect

agreement with the central theme of the whole piece. It is as if the subject matter had found the exact language to express it in consonance with its dignity. There is never any hesitancy in composition, no sign of weakness or of repetition. Even when some of the figures are not perfectly chiselled, one understands that the artist left them so on purpose, for such blemishes did not detract from the unity of the entire structure. One almost feels as if the artist were saying that the unpolished sculptures were not meant to be treated as isolated examples of art. They were space-compositions, and it was not necessary to finish them highly ; for then they might divert the attention of the spectator from the whole to the part.

From this point of view, the architecture of Khajraha appears substantially weaker in comparison. The female figures, which are so abundant here, are undoubtedly better examples of the sculptor's art than, say, at Bhuvaneswar, but they are so good and so perfect that they stand out as individual pieces to be admired separately, and have hardly any meaning when all the figures on one side of the temple are taken together. The figures of Khajraha are meant to be pure decoration set upon the face of the temple. That is why there is no order of arrangement, and so much repetition of the same theme at Khajraha and hardly any at Konarak. At the latter place, sculpture is made the hand-maid of architecture, and never usurps more attention than is its due.

Unlike the temples of Orissa, the temple of Khajraha is built upon an immense stylobate, which is so much bigger than the bottom of the temple itself that it spreads on all sides and leaves a wide path for circumambulation all round the temple. And one thing is very striking about the face of this stylobate. While the face of the temple is profusely decorated, that of the stylobate has been left severely plain in contrast to it. It is as if the architect desired to display the decorativeness of the temple against the plainness of the background. We can imagine him holding a highly jewelled ornament in a plain casket held up before the king for his admiration. He wanted his artistic creation to be admired ; and evidently he lacked that quality of strength and self-confidence which might have made him independent of his audience's applause.

The temple of Kandariya Mahadeva rises in a series of tiers. Orissan temples usually have a set of three or five mouldings to form their base. But at Khajraha the base is repeated, which means that there are two sets of mouldings separated from one

another by a short upright interval. The space between the top of the base and the bottom of the tower is likewise divided into two bands (*bāndhanā*) and three friezes (*jāṅgha*), instead of one and two as in Orissa. The spirit of the temple seems to be of an urgency to reach up to greater and greater heights; and this is admirably illustrated by the character of the ribbed *āmalaka* at the top of the tower. In Orissa, one hardly ever comes across one *āmalaka* on the top¹ of another; but at Khajraha that seems to be the general rule instead. *Āmalakas* are laid one on top of another in a diminishing order of sizes, so that the reposefulness which is associated with the broad and flat *āmalakas* of Orissa is replaced by the feeling of aspiration which is associated with conical structures. This feeling is further emphasised by the importance assigned to the *sikharas* or small towers set upon the main tower itself. At Khajraha, they are more prominent than in Orissa. In the latter place they often lie flat upon the surface of the main tower; but at Khajraha they spring from the body of the tower, but immediately become independent of it and give the whole temple the appearance of an assemblage of crowded mountain-peaks.

All these together serve to make the temple of Khajraha an admirable symbol of the restlessness which is associated with youth, which constantly aspires to greater and greater heights, but which is ever afraid that it might fail to reach the greatest heights possible. It refuses to recognise its own limitations, and when nature sets those limitations, makes a pose of defiance against nature by *repeating* through its succession of *sikharas*, the conquest of height which it has already succeeded in making. Khajraha has no concern with the soil of human life from which it springs; and perhaps, in order to emphasise this isolation of its character, it was made to stand upon a plain and undecorated platform which cut it off completely from its surroundings and gave it an artificialness of setting.

One misses the catholicity of Konarak in the temple of Khajraha, the way in which Konarak accepts all that is good and bad in life, and all that is high and low. Khajraha is too much concerned about its own lyrical movement to be charitable to all the phases of human life; and that is why it will always be considered as inferior to the temple of the Sun at Konarak which is so full of the epic quality. But it will certainly remain as one of the best examples of romanticism in architecture.

1 The temple of Rajarani being the only example known to the writer.

THE PROBLEM OF "POETIC BELIEF",
with reference to Rabindranath's "Sha-Jahan."

K. R. Kripalani

IN so far as poets are not mere purveyors to our poetic palates, that is, in so far as they do not aim directly to please us, or the connoisseurs among us, they may be presumed to please themselves, which raises them to the dignity of aristocrats ; for exercise of self-pleasure in matters of approved quality is the envied distinction of that noble caste. The poets, however, have not been content with such mere distinction. They, and their devotees, have further claimed on their behalf a portion of the absolute glory of those rare ones of this earth who are said to walk in the light of Truth ; holding, as one of them has put it, "the rose upon Truth's lips", if not exactly Truth itself.

This claim, like our other earthly claims, may be admitted, and even upheld, though never proved. Those who admit this claim have, however, created an additional problem for themselves, which may be put thus: How far do poets themselves believe what they utter in their poems ? It is pardonable to wish to be convinced of at least the sincerity of those whom we thus affiliate to Truth. Nor is the question very impertinent or unreasonable, considering that some at least of our eminent men, reputed to be themselves in league with Truth, have, somewhat roughly, and it seems rather snobbishly, rebuked them for their "extravagant" claims. Plato exiled them from his Republic, and, it is said, the Prophet of Islam once passionately defended his verse against the slander of poetry. Bacon, in a pontifical mood, whilst admitting that the "lies" of poets "make for pleasure," dismissed them from any further relevance to the subject of his pronouncement, which was Truth.

We need not, however, be unduly awed by these samples of spiritual or intellectual exclusiveness, for we can cite many more authorities, equally august, invoking poetry as the voice divine. A modern writer* has even gone so far as to express a hope that perhaps one day men will learn to admit that "Poetry is the reality, philosophy the illusion."

* Mr. Herbert Read in his Clark Lectures at Cambridge, 1930.

It is not necessary to our purpose, however, to alienate that formidable tribe known as philosophers, by making so exalted a claim for poetry at their expense. (Moreover, if all philosophy did prove an illusion, what means are left to us to *decide* on the reality of poetry ?) It is sufficient for our humble purpose to uphold our simple experience that whatever we may, or may not, have learnt of the substance of our being from the philosophers, or of its destiny from our prophets, we would assuredly not have known anything of the exquisite atmosphere of our being in which our mind discovers its hues, save on the undulations of the poet's imagination.

But the old question intrudes itself. For unless we are prepared to level poets to the mere rank of purveyors, we have to learn to measure their sincerity. One consideration, however, makes the problem considerably simpler ; and that is, our capacity for sensing directly the sincerity of what we read. Nothing moves us profoundly that has not moved its author profoundly, so that if we take care of our own reactions (which, by the way, is not a very easy thing to do) we are not likely to be tricked by a poet. But we are likely to involve ourselves in grave errors if we do not also take care of the difference between the poet's sincerity as a poet, and his everyday faith as a man in this common workaday world. It seems a poet oftentimes adopts a faith for the purposes of a poem which may contradict his everyday faith as a man and be none the less sincere as a poet. It would be unfair to pin down Wordsworth's faith to the Platonic doctrine of knowledge as recollection, and it would be even more unfair to adopt the logical alternative of choosing to doubt the sincerity of his mood when he wrote down his *Intimations of Immortality*. Poetic belief, that is, may be different from the religious or philosophic belief, which the poet may carry all his life, though it may not be entirely independent of it. And what the poet ordinarily demands of us is not that we be converted to his poetic or his other faith, but that we should share his mood by giving what has been aptly called "poetic assent" to his poetic belief.

The problem is very complex, and it would be presumptuous of me to pretend to discuss it in its full scope. But it might be interesting, even if not profitable, to take a single poem of a recognised poet and try to see if we can suggest a difference between his poetic faith and his real faith (real, only in the sense of surviving in everyday life). Let us take the *Ode to Shah-Jahan* of Rabindranath, a great poem of a great poet. Apart from the exquisite workmanship which proclaims a

superb artist, the poem quivers with a pathos and a hope at once so poignant and so sublime that no question is permitted of its sincerity. The only thing we may be permitted to ask is what in it is the poet's faith and what the man's. (I do not suggest that the poet's may not also be the man's. I merely mean that from the poet's belief we are not entitled to insist that it must also be the man's. It may or may not be.) The best way to arrive at this would be by analysing the mood of the poem, for it is there that they both merge and find their harmonious setting.

We might analyse the mood of the poem thus :

The sight or the image of Taj Mahal invokes for the poet's mind from the pages of history the image of the emperor who knew full well that in Time's relentless whirl nothing is allowed to endure ; and who, therefore, abdicating the vanity of all other earthly ambition, strove to build an immortal monument to the frustrated yearning of the bereaved human heart, thereby making immortal, by the help of Art, the only thing worth cherishing in this life, the luminous tear of the lover's eye. By the help of Art, therefore, the human heart achieves a sort of conquest over death. The sublime heroism of such endeavour moves the poet's mind to exalt the human heart that can command this *Megha-duta*¹ of all times to proclaim in every age the eternity of its love. But this very triumph conceals the inner tragedy of love. The futility of the bereaved human heart, fumbling for consolation in the illusion of Art, cannot escape the poet's sensitive imagination, nurtured on the Upanishads. Love must be redeemed from this futility. And so Shah-Jahan conquers Death—conquers, not coaxes—by conquering attachment. He shall not be chained in the transient, for ever domed in the illusion of the eternal. In rising from earth he has transcended its attachments and is moving in spheres where love is fulfilled for him in ever wider and wider rings up to the gateway of the Dawn, where full illumination awaits the human soul. It is attachment that renders the spirit helpless, not Death. There is therefore no inevitable tragedy in our life, to which it is the mission of Art to reconcile ourselves. Life itself fulfils itself, rising from ring to ring and making Art itself seem pathetic in its captivity in earthly attachment.

To those familiar with the writings of Rabindranath this mood will appear characteristically Rabindranathian. Not only is the Great

¹ "The Cloud-Messenger" of Kalidasa's famous poem.

Sentinel watching over the destiny of Man, but also the Great Herald proclaiming the unending march of his triumph. And we, on our part, are required, for the privilege of sharing this splendid mood, to give "poetic assent" to the idealised picture of Shah-Jahan as a wise, sad spirit, endeavouring to redeem the tragedy of human love with the help of Art ; and further to conceive of this spirit shedding off, along with its earthly garb, all earthly attachment and soaring from sphere to sphere in the transcendent glory of an almost "realised" soul. The conditions of the poem demand this belief from the poet, and the conditions of its full appreciation this assent from us.

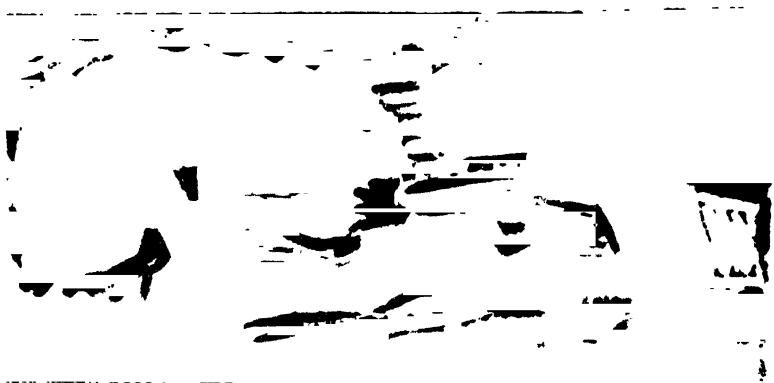
But we yield this assent in our own interest and must not, like simpletons, demand its price from the poet. We need not commit Rabindranath the man, released from the mood of the poem, to this twin belief. It may be that he really believes that the lascivious emperor was a perfect lover and a wise man, and he may also be believing in the individual spirit surviving after death in its upward motion. But he might just as conceivably be believing that at least part of the motive that inspired the Taj was sheer vanity of a man who could afford to turn the wealth of his empire and tempt the gaze of centuries to such glorification of his personal bereavement. And he might further be conceivably believing that the individual, instead of surviving after death as a psychic counterpart of his physical self, and necessarily soaring higher and higher, disintegrates into the elements and merely lives as the subtle poignancy of human association that seems to cling to every sight and object of Nature, "in the promising radiance of the dawn, and in the poignant passage of the wearied eve, and in the light of the full moon when the loveliness of the jessamine spreads its unearthly enchantment, and in those far-off beckonings where the senses are baffled and speech is dumb." Or he might as likely be having no clear-cut belief in this matter and, like many sensitive spirits, might be hoping rather than believing. We are, therefore, hardly justified in committing his philosophy of life to the passionate fervour of his poetic beliefs. And, in any case, it is an unfortunate habit that some people have of quoting a poet's utterances as arguments. The poet's privilege gives him a free passport to many worlds besides the one of pedestrian common sense, and in each world he adopts the conditions of its atmosphere. We may not intern him in any one of these.

Nevertheless since he carries his own person everywhere and with it his indispensable attendants, which, however, differ from poet to

poet, there is a certain unity in the utterances of a poet. In the poem under consideration, this unity is discernible in the final note of optimism, in the poet's humanism exalted by his unyielding faith in the ultimate triumph of the spirit. This note is a more or less constant attendant in Rabindranath's poetry, whether it is the human spirit moving from world to world after its liberation in death as in "Shah-Jahan", or in this very life, as the parting message of the lover in "The Last Song" suggests :—

"Do you hear the remorseless rumbling of the chariot-wheels of time as they rush through the emptiness of space, filling with fretting the bosom of the darkness? In this relentless rush, my friend, I am caught and whirled away from you, far away. I feel like crested, after myriad mortalities, on the hill-top of a new Dawn. My ancient self is scattered to the winds, leaving no track behind by which I may trace myself back to the old. I could not, if I looked back, discover my dissolved self. Now, then, my friend, farewell!"

The poetic belief cannot be entirely independent of the man's philosophic faith, but there is traceable between them no logical connection. (Psychological connection, of course, must lurk somewhere.) In "Shah Jahan" both the poetic and the philosophic beliefs find their meeting point in this note of triumph, of repudiation of any bondage, even of love, on the human spirit. Rabindranath's is the religion of man, man the individual, and men the race, ever creating and never limited by their creations. We may not limit such a poet to one of his own creations.



LOVERS.

STARS beyond number or imagination
Silent in the sky ;
Shadowy valleys and dark woods over them,
Still, without a sigh ;
A house, lost in vastness and in silence,
With no house nigh ;
A room apart, with not a whisper in it
As the hours steal by :
Sleeping in our star-surrounded darkness,
You and I.

Laurence Binyon.



WISDOM AND COMPASSION.

How magnificent is wisdom !
The bright sun cleaves to heaven,
Universally shining over all living beings.
Happiness knows no boundary.

How magnificent is compassion !
The brilliant moon hangs on the sky,
Universally shining over all living beings.
Happiness eternally exists.

Wisdom and compassion,
As bright as sun and moon,
Ever continue to grow,
Universally benefiting all living beings.

Tai Chi Tao.

The eighth month of the twenty-fourth year of the Chinese
Republic. Nanking.

GANAPATI—(continued)

HARIDAS MITRA

SECTION 8.

IN reality, Gaṇeśa as Vighneśa was originally a deity of malevolent or malignant type, but later on he underwent transformation into a more benignant deity.

In this process of transformation and modification, Gaṇeśa has more than one parallel and analogy in India :

- (1) firstly, in the Brāhmaṇic Mātṛkās, 'Mother goddesses' with whom Gaṇeśa was often associated in religious literature¹ and sculpture² ;
- (2) in the example of Garuḍa, the vehicle, *vāhana* of Viṣṇu ; and
- (3) in the Buddhist Goddess Hārītī.

Each of these analogous examples, betrays like Gaṇeśa, a double character.

The Mātṛkās, varying in number from seven to sixteen, were originally blood-thirsty and had to be propitiated by offerings of sacrifices but later they become patron deities of children. In later times they were often represented in sculpture—each having a child in her lap, which she was suckling. But there is an exception in the case of Cāmuṇḍī who is a mere skeleton and also too furious-looking to have a child in her arms.

In a similar manner, Garuḍa was at first *Pannagāri*, 'the arch-enemy of the Nāgas', his archetype probably being some carnivorous birds that destroy reptiles. But such acts of destruction was found to be incompatible with Garuḍa's character as the *vāhana* of Viṣṇu, who protects the universe. Consequently Garuḍa was humanised in later Gauḍian Art³ and he was even given armlets and necklaces of snakes, *nāga-bhūṣaṇas*. This was to bring out more forcibly the fact—that Garuḍa was fully imbued with the spirit of *ahiṃsā*, so that serpents had put absolute trust in his harmless attitude.

Yet another deity, the Buddhist goddess Hārītī⁴, was originally of

1. *Katyāyana Smṛti*; in connection with this as well as the next following note, see *ante* section 3, notes 17 & 18.

2. *E.g.* in Ellora Caves.

3. See Akshay Kumar Maitreya's article, *Garuḍa, the carrier of Viṣṇu: in Bengal & Java*. In *Rūpam*, No. 1. (The Indian Society of Oriental Art, Calcutta.)

4. Alice Getty : *The Gods of N. Buddhism*. (Oxford, 1914) under *Hārītī*, p. 75.

malevolent nature. She was a terrible Yakṣī, an ogress who had vowed to devour all the children in Rājagṛha. We may recognise in her the personification of some infantile epidemic.⁵ She is the Buddhist counterpart of Śītālā and is still worshipped in Nepal as the Goddess of small-pox.

According to Buddhist accounts, the Buddha managed to convert by a stratagem this child-eating ogress. The Blessed One hid under his alms-bowl the best-beloved of Hārītī's five hundred sons. Thereupon Hārītī repented and became a *bhikṣuṇī*. The Chinese pilgrim I-tsing found statutes of Hārītī in the Buddhist monasteries of North India where she was adored as a 'giver of children'. She was represented with a child in her arms and three or four other ones around her knees.⁶

From the extant images, it seems that Gaṇeśa was at first represented as seated on his haunches — as a transition to the standing position — and possessed with two hands⁷ holding *madhu-karkaṭikā* or *bijapūra* or *jambīra*

5. Both Pūtanā and Kaṭa-putanā (probably corresponding to the Puṭana and the Kaṭa-pūṭana of the Buddhist Vighnāntaka legend) are enumerated among the twelve *Mātrkās* — forms of infantile epidemic, dealt with, in the *Kumāra Tantra*, an authoritative Skt. *Vaidyaka* work on child-welfare *Kaumāra-bhṛtya*, ascribed to *Laṅkādhīpati Rāvaṇa*. According to popular tradition, this king was the ancestor of an enormously big progeny—having had one hundred thousand sons and one hundred and twenty-five thousand grandsons! The high antiquity and the authoritative nature of the *Kumāra Tantra*, are proved by the fact that the work was translated into Chinese and the Chinese version is included in the supplementary list of works of the Kiyoto Edition of the *Tripiṭaka*.

(Skt. Version) *Kumāra Tantram. Laṅkādhīpati-Rāvaṇa-kṛtam Bhāṣā-ṭīkā-saṁhitā*. (Published by Śrī-Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay).

Pūtanā is also another well-known demoness, of *Harivaṁśa*. She was sent in disguise by Kāṁsa to kill Kṛṣṇa, while yet a suckling, by feeding him with her poisonous breast-milk; but on the contrary, she was killed herself.

6. A. Foucher: *Notes on the Ancient Geography of Gandhara*, translated by Hargreaves, *Arch. Surv. Ind.*, p. 17.

7. According to the prescribed rules of the *Śilpa-Sāstras*, the images of Deities should have at least four hands. See *Sukra-nīli-sāra*, chapter IV, sec. IV, *Slokas* 274 and 275-78. The two-handed forms of Gaṇeśa might therefore point to a time when Gaṇeśa had not yet attained the position of a God-head or received independent worship.

We may in this connection compare and contrast the two-handed and seated image of Gaṇeśa found at Bhumara with a chain of bells. The image is a specimen of Gupta Art of about the Fifth Century A. C.

One of the oldest and exceedingly well-executed life-size stucco figure of Gaṇeśa with two hands is to be found in the Tabo monastery of Little Tibet.

The crude figures of Gaṇeśa, in fresco and on bronze or painted on panels, from Central Asia, are mostly two-handed and a few four-handed. Among the *Ayudhas*, we find the radish, the axe and the pot of sweet-meats, figuring frequently. See Sec. 3 Note 23, *supra*.

Gaṇeśa however seems to have generally occupied a position inferior and subservient to his divine parents — Lord Śiva and the Devī, with whom he is associated as a *Parśva-devatā*. The almost complete absence of inscribed images of Gaṇeśa, shows that, in general, the *Yajamānas* or the *Dānapatis* (Donors) hardly ever thought as much of Gaṇeśa as they did of the other gods of the *Pañca-devatā* group.

There are, of course, most magnificent and colossal Gaṇeśa images both in Southern and Northern India; but the images in the main shrines, are in every case, even more impressive in beauty and size.

(all three being different kinds of lime, *citra medica*) and *utpala* the lily ; these grow wild and are favourite edibles of the wild elephant.

Gaṇeśa's first *āyudhas* 'weapons, of offence and defence' seem to be the club and the axe, which must have formed some of the first weapons invented by primitive tribes.

Probably with the growth of agriculture, taming of elephants and such other knowledge, the rope for binding elephants *pāsa*, and the instrument for goading *aṅkuṣa*, as also the sugarcane, the radish etc. and ultimately sweetmeats *modaka*, and the bead-garland *akṣasūtra* came to be regarded as Gaṇeśa's weapons, in successive turns.

But as the beloved son of Lord Śiva, the conception of Gaṇeśa was finally brought in a line with that of Śiva ; for, in this fully developed stage, Gaṇeśa is conceived as possessing all the characteristic ornaments and bodily poses of his father e.g. the clotted locks of hair, the crescent moon, the tridents *triśūla*, and the five faces, as is evident from the following *Dhyāna Slokas* for Śiva⁸ and Gaṇeśa⁹ respectively.

शिवध्यानं—

मुक्तापीतपथोदभौतिकजवावर्धमुत्सैः पञ्चभि-
स्त्राक्षैरञ्जितमीयमिन्दुमुकुटं पूषेन्नुकोटिप्रभम् ।
शूलं टङ्कुरुपायवज्रवह्मनान् नागेन्द्रघण्टाङ्कुशान्
पाशाभीतिहरं दधानेममिताकल्पोज्ज्वलाङ्ग भजे ॥

गणेश ध्यानं—

मुक्ताकाञ्चननील कुन्दचुम्बुलच्छायेस्त्रिनेत्राग्निते-
नांगास्यैहरिवाहनं शशिधरं हेरम्बमर्कप्रभम् ।
वृत्तं दानमभीतिभोदकरदा टङ्कं शिरोऽन्नात्मिकां
मालां मुद्गरमङ्कुशं त्रिशिखकं द्योर्भिर्दधानं भजे ॥

A. S. Ramanatha Ayyar : *Chidambaram and its dancing Lord*, in *Shama'a* Vol. V, No. 3, (Madras, 1925), pp. 157-8 :—"This temple contains . . . a huge monolithic image of (red-painted) Śindūra-Gaṇapati, which is reputed to be the biggest in Southern India and to whom a huge bolus of three *Kuruṇi* of rice is offered daily as *nivedanam* . . ."

One of the biggest and most magnificent Gaṇeśa images in North India, is the *Pārśva-devatā* (Gaṇeśa) of the Liṅga-raja temple at Bhuvaneśvara, Orissa. It is fourhanded, wearing a *Jaṭā-mukūṭa*, *Nagōpavīta* and in half-dancing posture. The left ankle wears a hooded cobra as a *Vira-valaya* (Telugu, *Gaja-gaṇḍa-pendarram*). The priests are justly proud of this Gaṇeśa, which is a most wonderful specimen of plastic art. It is the best example of Gaṇeśa, probably in Orissa.

8. *Srī-Rudra-Yāmala*. Paṭala 48, *Rudra-mantra-prakāśa*.

9. *Puraścaryārṇava*. Taraṅga 8, *Gaṇeśa-mantra-puraścaraṇam*; and *Tantra-sāra*, (Vasumatī Pr., Cal. 5th edition), pp. 116-17; also N. K. Bhattasali : *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, (Dacca, 1929), pp. 146-47; the last reference contains this passage :—"A unique five-faced image of Gaṇeśa of the Heramba Class . . . dug up somewhere in the ruins of Rampal . . . is now preserved at the Vaiṣṇava Monastery at Munsiganj, Dt. Dacca."

WHERE CASUARINAS GROW

(To D.W.)

Does Beauty ever die?
Nay, not till earth and sun and sky
Dissolve in nothingness, and poets sing
No more
Here in these casuarina woods
Beauty's green shadowed solitudes—
Scarlet flamboyantes spring to birth
From the young breast of virgin earth,
And here the ancient seas still bring
Their timeless tributes to the lonely shore.

And the years will blend with unborn years,
And ecstasy and pain and peace and tears
Will haunt man's fleeting days ;
But if in some far
And distant age we tread again the ways,
Grown beautiful—brave moths that flit
From star to star—
Perchance I shall return and softly sit
On this grey self-same stone, and find
Some dream of beauty I have left behind.
And stranger subtler poetry shall stir in these
Same melancholy casuarina trees.

E. H. d'Alvis.



Gita Roy

ARABESQUE.

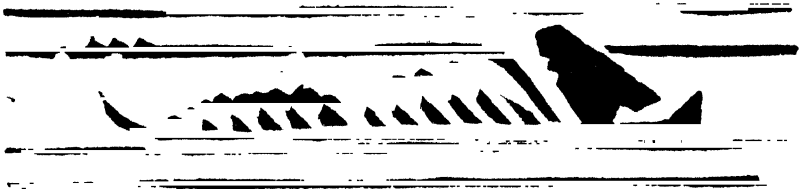
BETWEEN eternities of dream
I woke, and saw the pale stars gleam.
From the bare trees the white mist fell
Like Winter blossom, shroud on shroud,
While the white moon above the dell
Sped through the silver wisps of cloud.
Alone beneath the ancient skies,
Troubled, I reasoned in this wise:
Ten thousand, thousand years have gone,
And men have loved, and men have wept,
While unawakened I have slept
Unborn among the dead—slept on
Among the unawakened dead.
“It is most strange, most strange,” I said.
Then half in anger, half in mirth,
I called upon the drowsy Earth,
“Mother ! Mother ! Tell me why !”
Intent I listened for reply.
Out in the night beneath the trees
Where white mist-blossomed boughs were swaying,
I heard a woodland satyr playing
In modulated silences.

Ranald Newson.

BARCAROLLE.

SWAYING through gloom-shadowed waters and white rising mist,
The silent ship steers through the night with One at the mast.
Startled from slumber great birds rise up from the flood,
Swerve and are lost in the darkness. Nought stirs save the dip
Of hushed oars in the starless waters and unfathomed deep:
Save when the chill wind bears through the night, sombre-domed,
The wail of the doomed: the wail of the doomed.

Ranald Newson.



REVIEWS

Mr. Russell Reviews the Nineteenth Century

Freedom and Organisation (1814-1914) : Bertrand Russell.

MR. BERTRAND RUSSELL has never claimed to be a historian and does not present the above work to the reader as a narration of the events of a century (1814-1914). It is as a student of human affairs that he has brought his acute and discerning intellect to bear on the events and personalities whose conflicts and co-operations brought about conditions that resulted in the crisis of 1914, and threaten to result in a greater crisis. Whether even in a world where "Chaos umpire sits and by decision more embroils the fray by which he reigns," could be discerned forces and tendencies which the human intelligence could understand, accept and organise for the benefit of man, seems to be the object of Mr. Russell's analysis. Whether, however, the human intelligence is likely to employ itself so rationally, is a question on which the unebriated intellect of Mr. Russell would prefer not to be prophetic, for "high arbiter chance governs all."

The two main forces whose opposition and interaction were the chief causes of change in the nineteenth century are: "the belief in FREEDOM which was common to Liberals and Radicals, and the necessity for ORGANISATION which arose through industrial and scientific technique." Mr. Russell is neither intoxicated with pseudo-mysticism nor harassed by pseudo-scientificism. He would neither believe that mere ideas or inspirations are the chief motive forces of historical change, for the belief in Freedom itself "was recommended chiefly by economic considerations" though it "had also an obvious connection with Protestantism"; nor that all change could adequately be accounted for by impersonal economic forces, for "the part played in history by individuals, which was over-emphasized by Carlyle, and is still exaggerated in our day by his reactionary disciples, tends, on the other hand, to be unduly minimized by those who believe themselves to have discovered the laws of sociological change." Nor should a disinterested observer of human affairs "ignore the part played by what may be called chance."

The book has therefore a varied interest. Biographical impressions of the great personalities discussed make it fascinatingly human—at times a little too human, for the author's curiosity for the purely per-

sonal and private, and his keen, though quiet irony are freely indulged: somewhat perhaps to the detriment of the impartial dignity of the general tone but certainly to the benefit of our enjoyment. Illuminating discussions of the political doctrines that inflamed the imagination of men in the nineteenth century and still continue to do so give to the book the intellectual depth that one has come to associate with all the works of this author. Disinterested survey of impersonal forces which seem to make human idealism either futile, if in opposition, or servile, if in league, creates in one a sense of the awful ruthlessness that directs man's destiny, depriving his will of much of its dignity. And coupled with this sense is an honest sceptic's shrugging of his shoulders at what appears to be an element of frivolous chance. In a word, it is a survey of human affairs by a philosopher who had long ago parted with pedantry for wisdom.

To begin with the human interest first: some of the author's comments on the personalities of the age may be cited. Of the Prince Regent (George IV) he writes: "an elderly beau, much ashamed of his corpulence, but too greedy to take any steps to cure it. Politically, the Prince Regent stood for all that was most reactionary; privately for all that was most despicable. . . . Throughout his whole life, so far as is known, he never succeeded in acquiring the respect of any single human being."

Of Metternich: "Conceit is not peculiar to any one period, but Metternich's special brand of pompous priggery belongs to the epoch between the Napoleonic wars and the Great War. If we are to believe his Memoirs, he was totally devoid of ambition, and remained in public life solely from a sense of duty and the painful realization that others lacked his abilities."

Of Talleyrand: "His conversation had such charm that even in old age he could captivate the prudish ladies of a morally regenerated but intellectually enfeebled century: . . . Undeniably he was a scamp, but he did less harm than many men of impeccable rectitude."

Of the political sagacity of the Great Duke he is content to quote Tom Moor's lines:

With how moderate a portion of brains
Some heroes contrive to get on.

Of the English aristocracy in the early nineteenth century:

"The Tories were, on the whole, less intelligent than the Whigs. Their leading principle, opposition to France and to all French ideas, was one which neither demanded nor stimulated intellectual thought.

... They were, of course, opposed to popular education, freedom of the Press, and seditious oratory. For the rest, they drank their port from loyalty to our ancient ally Portugal, and accepted the consequent gout as a price paid for the performance of patriotic duty. . . . The Whigs were more interesting and more complex. . . . It must not be supposed that all Whig society was as intellectual as the Holland House dinner parties. But on the whole the leading Whigs were people of considerable culture, which they took lightly, and combined with an eighteenth century freedom of morals. Lady Holland had left a previous husband for Lord Holland, and they had lived together for sometime before she was divorced. Melbourne's wife, as all the world knew, had been madly in love with Byron, and had pursued him even more than he liked. Lady Oxford also loved Byron, and her affection was reciprocated. Sir Francis Burdett was another of Lady Oxford's lovers, and her children were known as the Oxford Miscellany. . . . Polite scepticism was common among the Whigs. . . . (But) they always knew where to draw the line and they drew it, emphatically, at Shelley. The prejudice persisted down to my own day, and, I am told, still persists in some circles. When, at the age of sixteen, I became interested in Shelley, I was informed that Byron could be forgiven, because, though he had sinned, he had been led into sin by the unfortunate circumstances of his youth, and had always been haunted by remorse, but that for Shelley's moral character there was nothing to be said, since he acted on principle, and therefore could not be worth reading."

But there was also a less amusing side to this aristocratic life, whose victims were the industrial workers and their helpless children. . . . "The agony of tortured children is an undertone to the elegant conversation of Holland House." In 1819, an Act was passed to relieve some of the horrors in the factories, "but proved wholly ineffective, as the work of inspection was left to magistrates and clergymen. To the relief of employers, experience showed that magistrates and clergymen had no objection to law-breaking when its purpose was merely the torture of children."

This ruthlessness of the early industrial era received its intellectual justification from the doctrine of Malthus and, to a lesser extent, from the Utilitarians. Mr. Russell, however, thinks that Malthus's principle of population is fundamentally sound, although its importance to white races has been destroyed by a variety of reasons. "In Asia it remains important." A judgement which every Indian should ponder.

Gandhiji has also advised the same restraint, but for non-Malthusian motives. But as in France and England, the population has been effectively checked without the poor having been frightened into "prudence", so we may hope in India the population's pace will be stayed without the virtuous being frightened into celibacy.

There are some interesting comments on the Utilitarians: "The intellectual conviction that pleasure is the sole good, together with a temperamental incapacity for experiencing it, was characteristic of Utilitarians. From the point of view of the calculus of pleasures and pains, their emotional poverty was advantageous: they tended to think that pleasure could be measured by bank-account, and pain by fines or terms of imprisonment. Unselfish and stoical devotion to the doctrine that every man seeks only his own pleasure is a curious psychological paradox. Something, not dissimilar, was to be found in Lenin and his most sincere followers. Lenin held, apparently, that the good consists in abundance of material commodities; he was very scornful of all appeals to altruism, and believed, as firmly as the Benthamites, that economic self-interest governs men's economic activities. On behalf of this creed, he endured persecution, exile and poverty; when he rose to be the head of a great state he lived with Spartan simplicity; and from worship of material prosperity he plunged his country into many years of abysmal poverty. Benthamites were not called upon for such heroic action, but their mentality is closely similar." The author's defence of the materialistic basis of Cobden's faith in Free Trade and Pacifism and the opportunity it gives him of laying bare the tortuous idealism of Tennysonian sentimentalists is characteristic. "Like many reformers, he (Cobden) was inspired by common sense. He considered that nations should pursue national wealth, without too much regard to such things as glory and territory. He advocated pacifism, not on any abstract *a priori* ground, but on the ground that wars and preparations for wars are wasteful considered as investments. His explicit argument for internationalism was that nationalism diminished the wealth of mankind. . . . I am not prepared to maintain, as an abstract proposition of ethics, that there is nothing better than material prosperity, but I do maintain, in common with Cobden, that of all political purposes which have had important social effects the pursuit of general material wealth is the best. Nay, more: when well-fed people tell the poor that they ought to have souls above the cravings of the belly there is something nauseous and hypocritical about the whole performance."

Indians would find Cobden's views on British imperialism in India particularly interesting ; more so as they were announced during the Mutiny, "when most English people lost their heads."

"Unfortunately for me I can't even co-operate with those who seek to 'reform' India, for I have no faith in the power of England to govern that country at all permanently ; and though I should like to see the Company abolished—because that is a screen between the English nation and a full sight of its awful responsibilities—yet I do not believe in the possibility of the Crown governing India under the control of Parliament. If the House of Commons were to renounce all responsibility for domestic legislation, and give itself exclusively to the task of governing one hundred millions of Asiatics, it would fail. Hindostan must be ruled by those who live on that side of the Globe. Its people will prefer to be ruled badly—*according to our notions*—by its own colour, kith and kin, than to submit to the humiliation of being better governed by a succession of transient intruders from the Antipodes."

The chapters on Socialism are the most illuminating of all, for here Mr. Russell's sympathy and intellectual profundity—the two most characteristic virtues of his—are both in exercise. The romantic career of Robert Owen, the founder of modern Socialism, is traced with great sympathy ; how beginning as the typical hero of Smiles' *Self-Help*, he rose to a position of great wealth and influence, and how, love of justice proving stronger than love of power, he identified himself with the working classes, and was the first to view industrial problems from the point of view of the workmen.

" 'The working classes,' he concludes, 'have now no adequate means of contending with mechanical power.' Since machinery cannot be discontinued, either millions must starve or 'advantageous occupation must be found for the poor and unemployed working classes, to whose labour mechanism must be rendered subservient, instead of being applied, as at present, to supersede it.' " Owen's experience of religious men led him to pronounce very bold judgement concerning the same. Religious systems, he believed, "have made man the most inconsistent, and the most miserable being in existence. By the errors of these systems he has been made a weak, imbecile animal ; a furious bigot and fanatic ; or a miserable hypocrite ; and should these qualities be carried, not only into the projected villages, but *into Paradise itself a Paradise would be no longer found !*" And this from a man who "was quite a saint ; and than whom few men have been more wholly lovable."

But Marx certainly was not lovable. He was bitter, pugnacious, and intensely jealous of his rivals. His treatment of Bakunin, the Anarchist Communist, was mean and unscrupulous. Nevertheless, "Marx was the first intellectually eminent economist to consider the facts of economics from the standpoint of the proletariat. The orthodox economists believed that they were creating an impersonal science, as free from bias as mathematics ; Marx, however, had no difficulty in proving that their capitalist bias led them into frequent errors and inconsistencies. The whole of economics, he maintained, took on a completely different aspect when viewed from the wage-earner's point of view. His devotion to the interests of the proletariat is perhaps somewhat surprising, in view of his bourgeois origin and his academic education. He had all his life a love of domination associated with a feeling of inferiority, which made him prickly with social superiors, ruthless with rivals, and kind to children. It was probably this trait in his character that first led him to become the champion of the oppressed."

Mr. Russell has very pertinent observations to make on Marx's metaphysics, known as Dialectical Materialism. As regards the materialism of it, he refrains from saying much, since he "could not do so without writing a complete philosophical treatise." He points out, however, that Marx's own conception of Materialism was not without ambiguity. Sometimes it is the "historical materialism" in the sense in which Engels understood it, and sometimes it is little different from pragmatism ; and he "applied the one or the other as suited the purpose of his argument." He contents himself with the remark: "For my part, while I do not think that materialism can be proved, I think Lenin is right in saying that it is not *disproved* by modern physics." His remarks, however, on the Dialectic in History which was a cardinal article of faith (though he would not have liked it to be called an article of faith) with Marx and which he took over from Hegel, are more confidently pronounced, and are worth quoting: "The Hegelian dialectic was a full-blooded affair. . . . The historical development of the world in time was merely an objectification of this process of thought. This view appeared possible to Hegel, because for him mind was the ultimate reality ; for Marx, on the contrary, matter is the ultimate reality. Nevertheless he continues to think that the world develops according to a logical formula. To Hegel, the development of history is as logical as a game of chess. Marx and Engels keep the rules of chess, while supposing that the chessmen move themselves in accordance with the laws of

physics, without the intervention of a player." "Why should the outcome of a conflict in politics," asks Mr. Russell very pertinently, "always be the establishment of some more developed system? This has not, in fact, been the case in innumerable instances. The barbarian invasion of Rome did not give rise to more developed economic forms, nor did the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, or the destruction of the Albigenses in the south of France. Before the time of Homer the civilization had been destroyed, and it was many centuries before a developed civilization again emerged in Greece. The examples of decay and retrogression are at least as numerous and as important in history as the examples of development. The opposite view, which appears in the works of Marx and Engels, is nothing but nineteenth-century optimism. . . . This is a matter of practical as well as theoretical importance. Communists always assume that conflicts between communism and capitalism, while they may for a time result in partial victories for capitalism, must in the end lead to the establishment of communism. They do not envisage another possible result, quite as probable, namely, a return to barbarism. We all know that modern war is a somewhat serious matter, and that in the next world war it is likely that large populations will be virtually exterminated by poison gases and bacteria. Can it be seriously supposed that after a war in which the great centres of population and most important industrial plant had been wiped out, the remaining population would be in a mood to establish scientific communism? Is it not practically certain that the survivors would be in a mood of gibbering and superstitious brutality, fighting all against all for the last turnip or the last mangel-wurzel? . . . I am afraid the dogmatic optimism of the communist doctrine must be regarded as a relic of Victorianism."

Commenting on Marx's theory that class-conflict has been the only motive force of progress, Mr. Russell observes: ". . . since all human development has, according to Marx, been governed by conflicts of classes, and since under communism there is to be only one class, it follows that there can be no further development, and that mankind must go on for ever in a stage of Byzantine immobility. This does not seem plausible, and it suggests that there must be other causes of political events besides those of which Marx has taken account."

Mr. Russell thinks that Marx's metaphysics has encumbered rather than illuminated the real worth of Marx's political conclusions. "The question whether communism is going to become universal, is

quite independent of metaphysics. It may be that a metaphysic is helpful in the fight ; early Mohammedan conquests were much facilitated by the belief that the faithful who died in battle went straight to Paradise, and similarly the efforts of Communists may be stimulated by the belief that there is a God called Dialectical Materialism who is fighting on their side, and will, in His own good time, give them the victory. On the other hand, there are many people to whom it is repugnant to have to profess belief in propositions for which they see no evidence, and the loss of such people must be reckoned as a disadvantage resulting from the communist metaphysic."

Another point of attack in Marx's economic interpretation of history is that even if methods of production are the sole factor that determines social and political evolution, what brings about change in the methods of production themselves ? "As a matter of fact, methods of production change, in the main, owing to intellectual causes, owing, that is to say, to scientific discoveries and inventions. Marx thinks that discoveries and inventions are made when the economic situation calls for them. This, however, is quite an unhistorical view. Why was there practically no experimental science from the time of Archimedes to the time of Leonardo ? For six centuries after Archimedes the economic conditions were such as should have made scientific work easy. It was the growth of science after Renaissance that led to modern industry. This intellectual causation of economic processes is not adequately recognised by Marx."

As regards practical Marxism which centres round class-conflict, Mr. Russell thinks that its weakness lies in underrating the strength of nationalism, and he quotes a long passage from Marx in which the latter scornfully dismisses the aspirations of the Slavs of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to free themselves from the German yoke in a tone which unmistakably shows his German bias. "If Marx had had any power of self-criticism, the fact that he could write this passage should have shown him that even Marxists are not exempt from nationalist bias." Finally "Marx, by his teaching, created the class war which he prophesied, but by his excessive glorification of manual labour he caused the division of classes to come at a lower point in the social scale than was necessary, and thereby made enemies of the most important class in the modern economic world, the men who do the skilled work of industrialism. . . . Marxism, by appealing to proletarian hatred, has lost many important possible allies. At the same time, hatred being the most dynamic of human passions, it has generated a movement

more energetic and determined than it could have been if it had had a less degree of fierceness. . . . To appeal to hatred may be the right psychology for winning victory in a war ; so all the belligerents thought from 1914 to 1918. But it is not the right psychology for subsequent construction ; to us, who suffer the aftermath of the Treaty of Versailles, this should be obvious. Marx was not a wholly pleasant character : envy and malice abound in his pages. Unfortunately, much of what was least admirable in his disposition has been copied by his followers. One can not but feel that any war waged in such a spirit must, if successful, lead to a peace as disastrous as that of Versailles. Hatred, indulged beyond a point, becomes a habit, and must seek perpetually new victims."

These are wise words of one of the most chastened intellects of our age and Communists would do well to meditate on their truth. If they imagine that Mr. Russell has written them because he has no sympathy at all with Marx, they might be assured by the following tribute. "Like other founders of doctrines he (Marx) needs emendation in various respects, and misfortune is likely to result if he is treated with religious awe. But if he is treated as fallible, he will still be found to contain much of the most important truth."

The chapters on American Democracy and the growth of American Industry read like romance. There is less scope for intellectual analysis here, while the review of American heroes and adventurers provides ample play for comment and irony. Of Jackson, he says : "He disliked democracy, and admired England. Throughout his career he aimed at making America resemble England. He hoped that plutocracy would develop into aristocracy, and he rightly regarded corruption as the best method for causing plutocracy to prevail over democracy."

For Abraham Lincoln Mr. Russell has genuine admiration. He considers him as "one of the few thoroughly consistent believers in democracy that have ever lived. He believed not only, like Jefferson, in government by the *people* but in *government* by the people ; he never lost sight of the need of authority and submission to the law." About his conduct of the civil war : "To conduct a great war, through years of difficulty and ill success, resolutely, to a victorious conclusion, and to remain throughout conciliatory and calm and large minded, is a feat which was accomplished by Lincoln, but, so far as I know, by no other historical character."

The story of competitive capitalism in America has all the thrills

of buccaneering adventures. Vanderbilt, Drew, Fisk, Gould,—and on a more gigantic scale—Rockefeller, Carnegie, Ford, and Morgan! All of them heroes of a certain kind; all of them daring, achieving, mastering; without scruple, without mercy. They believed in free competition, believed so ruthlessly that competition ceased to be itself and became monopoly! “To the dismay of those who were not successful, the prevailing philosophy turned out to be self-defeating: the competitors competed until only one survived, and that one could then no longer use competition as its watchword.” The change, however, was not due to any conscious willing on the part of these men. For “technical forces were at work which, against the will of almost all the inhabitants of the United States, transformed the economic system from one in which many small firms competed to one in which, in a number of important industries, one or two vast corporations were in almost complete control.”

While in America the economic necessity for organisation in industry was mocking and overriding the claim of the individual to free competition, in Europe the political necessity for national unity was slowly evolving a consciousness in which the individual was to be totally subordinated to the greatness of his nation. Modern militant fascism is the child of these two tendencies. “Two men have been supreme in creating the modern world: Rockefeller and Bismarck. One in economics, the other in politics, refuted the liberal dream of universal happiness through individual competition, substituting monopoly and the corporate state, or at least movements towards them.”

It was Byron who first made Nationalism a truly romantic creed by his advocacy of Greece. Both Mazzini and Bismarck had come under the influence of this romantic Byronism. Mazzini's lyrical interpretation of the mystic significance of Nationality is particularly interesting to Indians because it was directly translated in the Mother-India cult of national revival in Bengal. That our early enthusiasts carried Gita in their pockets—there are some who still do—is irrelevant because there is nothing of Nationalism in that sacred text. Mazzini made Nationalism a *dharma*; then Gita supplied the necessary fortitude for the effective pursuit of the *dharma*. Says the Italian Patriot: “God has written one line of his thought on the cradle of each people. . . . special interests, special aptitudes, and, before all special functions, a special mission to fulfil, a special work to be done in the cause of the advancement of humanity, seem to me the true, infallible characteristics of Nationalities.” Each nation has

therefore a special function in the great ordering of the world by God ; but that of Italy was particularly noble. "The destinies of Italy are the destinies of the world." She was as "radiant, purified by suffering, moving as an angel of light among the nations that thought her dead." She was "the land destined by God to the great mission of giving moral unity to Europe, and through Europe to humanity." And now Abyssinia is bearing the full brunt of that idealism.

The philosophy of German Nationalism, on the other hand, was propounded by Fichte, though carried out later by Bismarck. Fichte taught that "it is first of all the Germans who are called upon to begin the new era as pioneers and models for the rest of mankind." This is proved by the argument that while other European nations have mixed languages, the Germans alone have a pure language. "Mazzini allowed," comments Mr. Russell, "every European nation (except the Irish) to have its own legitimate patriotism, and its own contribution to the symphony of human progress. Fichte is more thoroughgoing : 'only the German—the original man, who has not become dead in an arbitrary organisation—really has a people and is entitled to count on one, and he alone is capable of real and rational love of his nation.' In fact, 'to have character and to be German undoubtedly mean the same.'" Comparing the English political philosopher and the German, Mr. Russell observes : "Bentham held all men's happiness to be of equal importance. Fichte considers that the ignoble man should be sacrificed. Who is to decide which is the ignoble man ? Clearly the government. Hence every tyranny is justifiable, and the extirpation of political opponents can be carried out in the name of national nobility. . . . Nor was it only in Germany that he was admired. Carlyle extolled him, and T. H. Green taught a whole generation at Oxford to regard him as the perfection of ethical purity. Yet there is in the modern world no governmental cruelty, injustice, or abomination which this virtuous professor's principles fail to justify."

But though England herself, as a national state, remained happily free from this perverted "idealism", it was because, says Mr. Russell, all its impulses found sufficient vent in British imperialism as practised in Asia and Africa. "The Empire has been a cesspool for British moral refuse ; Germany had no such outlet, and had to endure its despots at home. 'I wanted to take service in India under the English flag,' said Bismarck in his youth, 'then I thought, after all, what harm have the Indians done me ?' The self-righteous Englishman will do well to ponder this reflection."

The succeeding chapters are an account of how the tendencies discussed above brought the world to the catastrophe of 1914.

This catastrophe was brought about because, on the one hand, industrial technique necessitated co-ordinated control of the means of production, and on the other, the political philosophies that ruled the world limited that co-ordination to the national boundaries, with the result that while the national rivalries remained, industrial efficiency only made them more dangerous. "Economic nationalism, the dominant force in the modern world, derives its strength from the fact that it combines the motives of self-interest, to which Marx and the Radicals appealed, with those less rational motives that inspire patriotism. Cool heads can be won over by dividends, hotheads by rhetorical appeals. By this means, a sinister synthesis is effected between the watchwords of different schools. Competition, yes, for the nation as a whole, sacrifice, yes, to the nation on the part of the individual who has no share in the plutocratic plunder. Wealth, yes, in the service of the national glory ; money-grubbing, no, since the industrial magnate in all he does is helping to make his country great.

"This was the prevalent creed throughout the civilized world in the years preceding the War, and is still more so at the present day. Organisation to the utmost within the state, freedom without limit in the relations between states. . . . By accepting national organisation from the Socialists, and international freedom from the Liberals, the world brought itself to a condition threatening to the very existence of civilization. . . . The same causes that produced war in 1914 are still operative, and unless checked by international control of investment and of raw material, they will inevitably produce the same effect, but on a larger scale. It is not by pacifist sentiment, but by world-wide economic organisation, that civilized mankind is to be saved from collective suicide."

Whether such enlightened self-interest will be availed of by "civilized men", Mr. Russell chooses not to hazard a prophecy. He is content to assert : "In politics, there are powerful forces other than self-interest, but in the main they are worse : they are forces of envy, pugnacity, cruelty, and love of domination. . . . in fact they are the very forces to which 'idealists' give noble names such as patriotism, national spirit, contempt for merely material ends, and so forth . . . undoubtedly, also, there are better motives than self-interest, but these are seldom sufficiently widespread to be politically powerful."

K. R. Kripalani.

Gita-Rahasya or Karma-yoga-Sastra (English translation).

First Edition, Volume I, Poona 1935. Rs. 6/-

THE late Bal Gangadhar Tilak was by no means a merely vigorous leader of public opinion ; he was a profound scholar as well, and he shared his love of Swaraj with his love of mathematics. Public activities took up too much of his time, as is usually the case with our leaders ; and only an enforced stay in Mandalay gave him leisure to put in writing his interpretation of the Gita, the epitome of Hindu faith which has been receiving the best attention of the greatest scholars of the nation throughout the ages. An entry in his notebook in the Mandalay Jail suggests that he had projected ten books at that time : on Hindu Law, Pre-Epic History of India, the Shankara Darshana, Principles of Infinitesimal Calculus, etc. Of these the *Gita-Rahasya* alone came to be actually written ; it will be undoubtedly an acquisition to get access to his jotted notes on his other contemplated works, which, we are told, are still preserved. The commentary in Marathi was actually written between the 2nd November 1910 and the 30th March 1911, with intervals, and in course of 108 days only ! It was published in 1915, and has run through several editions, inspiring translations in Hindi, Gujrati, Bengali, Kanarese, Telugu and Tamil ; but the Hindi version has enjoyed a wider currency than the others and has run through as many as seven editions. It is impertinent to attempt here a criticism of the Lokmanya's Commentary. Its comprehensive understanding has been admitted on all hands, as well as the scholarship which comes out in the course of the exposition. He was conscious that he had emphasised Karma-yoga ; he had done so advisedly, holding as he did that "Karma-yoga, or to put it in another way, the law of duty, is the combination of all that is best in spiritual science, in actual action and in an unselfish meditative Life." He had preached nothing new ; but had merely given the intended emphasis which had been placed there by earlier commentators referred to by Srimad Sankaracharyya in the beginning of the 3rd chapter of his Commentary. In course of his dissertation he has not only referred to the Vedas and the Upanishads but also to the works of the Maratha poets and commentators, to Ramdas and Tukaram, to Jnanesvari and to Vaman (for the work was primarily meant for the Marathi-speaking people), as well as to Kant and Mill, Spencer and Green, and other Western philosophers ; and it may be remembered that his patriotism and his

scholarship were equal to the difficulties consequent on an attempt to write in the vernacular on such a subject, using for the first time or inventing technical terms when necessary.

The volume under discussion contains the translation of the first thirteen chapters of the *Rahasya*. The translator, Srijiut Bhalchandra Sitaram Sukthankar is a distinguished graduate of the University of Bombay and has been responsible for a resolution passed by the Maharatha literary conference for translating the best works in Marathi literature into English. He has speeded up his work of translation, and that perhaps explains an occasional inaccuracy, e. g. in the beginning of the last chapter, but one must express satisfaction at the general success of the version which has now placed the Lokmanya's Commentary within the reach of a wider public. At the same time, the book ought to have been kept cleaner and the photos of the translator and the publishers, a full page reproduction of the translator, the pictorial map of the prominent schools of Indian philosophy might have been spared without any positive disadvantage to the book.

It is hoped that the volume will succeed in making accessible India's thought both in India and abroad, and that it will prove a fitting memorial to the great mind that prompted it.

P. R. Sen.

HANSA :

A Monthly Journal in Hindi, devoted to Indian culture—

Edited by Syts. Premchand and K. M. Munshi.

Benares.

THE HANSA has long been familiar to the Hindi-speaking India as a monthly story-teller, edited by that well-known Hindi author, syt. Premchand of Benares. In October last, however, this Journal underwent a metamorphosis and, with the cooperation of Mr. K. M. Munshi of Bombay, a leading novelist of Gujrat, was made into a vehicle of Hindi cultural renaissance. The first two numbers of this magazine in its new form have been published and disclose a catholicity of interests on which the editors deserve to be warmly congratulated. Besides articles, poems and short stories, originally written in Hindi, a good variety of readable matter has been translated from the various vernaculars of this our strange, myriad-tongued land, including Gujrati, Marathi, Sindhi, Kanarese, Sinhalese, Malayalam,

Tamil, Assamese, etc. An interesting feature of the magazine is, that alongside of the translations of these poems, are given their respective texts in the originals, transliterated in Devnagri script.

Glancing through this interesting and varied collection one gets a glimpse of the awakening that has come over the different provincial literatures of the country. New thought-waves breaking the placidity of our long slumbering vernaculars speak of a common influence. Need there was of some such common medium in which the different tongues overflowed and told their various tales. And HANSA, by fulfilling this long-felt need and providing this possibility of a regular confluence, can claim for itself a noble position in Indian journalism. We cannot help wishing it a long and glorious career.

Both the editors are celebrated names in their own literatures, and men of wide culture and national spirit, and may be relied upon to maintain not only a high standard of literary excellence but also of, what is not less necessary, freedom from vulgar biases, communal or religious.

Bhagwati Prasad Chandola.



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The Visva-Bharati Quarterly

Vol. I, Part IV, New Series.

Feb—April, 1936.

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Erratum : p. 38. line 25. between *adopt* and *new* insert *new ones*
Or they may migrate to . . .



Where the mind is without fear
and the head is held high,
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken
up into fragments by narrow domestic
walls;

Where words come out from the
depth of truth;
Where sireless striving
stretches its arms towards
perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason
has not lost its way into the
dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward
by thee into ever-widening
thought and action —

into that heaven of freedom,
my Father,
let my country awake.

Rabindranath Tagore

Santiniketan



THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

February

New Series, Vol. I. Part IV.

1936

THE JUDGING OF LITERATURE*

Rabindranath Tagore

WHEN one weeps in sorrow in the privacy of one's own room, no question arises of whether or not the expression is adequate to the feeling. But it is different when there is occasion for showing one's grief, for then it has to be proved to others ; whereupon the need for its adequate communication demands a greater intensity or amplitude of expression than does the feeling left to itself.

To the extent that one's grief belongs to oneself alone, it is restricted within limits which, however, may be overstepped when it has to be effectively proclaimed outside. The mother feels the loss of her child not only as a bereavement special to herself, but it is intolerable to her that the calamity which rends her heart should allow the others around her to carry on their eating and sleeping and other usual business, unperturbed ; for the indifference of the outside world comes as a further blow to her. Her natural desire to move others as she herself is moved, often leads to what may be called an unnatural excess of expression which cannot, however, be dismissed as artificial.

This applies not only to grief, but to most of our other emotions as well. In one aspect they are for ourselves, in the other for communication outside. If the emotion which is mine, is also felt by many, that is a matter of consolation or of pride to me. If what moves me leaves you cold, I feel hurt. And one reason is, that unless an emotion is proved by being shared, its truth is not established. If

* Translated from the Bengali (Sahitya—1903) by Surendranath Tagore.

I see the sky yellow, while others do not, that only points to some abnormality, some weakness in me. But, while it is easy to show that the blue is blue, it is difficult to make others realise as lovable or hateful, pleasant or painful, that which I like or dislike, that which gives me pleasure or pain. And in the latter case, as I was saying, it is not enough to give mere natural expression to my feelings, but the method or effort must be such as to induce the like feelings in others.

Hence the need for enlargement. If the reproduction of something has to be shown at a distance, it must be made on a larger scale, otherwise it would appear smaller than it really is, and so untrue to itself. My joys and sorrows are immediate to me, but not so to you from whom I am remote. So in telling of them to you the distance between us must be allowed for, and the expression of my emotion magnified accordingly. Such enlargement thus makes for truth.

The power of the literary artist, as of any other artist, has to be gauged by his ability to make the modifications of scale necessary for a true representation. To record what is, just as it is, is not literature. Nature reaches me immediately through my senses. Literature has to preserve and convey the original impression. And it is for the literary artist to make up for this lack of immediateness. Here comes in the difference between the truth of nature and the truth of literature.

On the one hand, a mother's grief is so obvious, its circumstances of pose and gesture, of voice and tears, of surroundings and concomitant events, are so convincing, that our sympathy is evoked without further ado. On the other hand, the bereaved mother in real life is usually neither in a fit state, nor has she the power, to express her feelings in their fulness. So the mother does not weep in literature as she weeps in nature, but that does not make her grief in the former case any the less true.

That is why literature does not, nor does any art, mirror nature. The former cannot, as a matter of fact, be an exact reflection of the latter, because in nature we perceive sensible things, while in literature we are made to perceive things that are not directly sensible. For this purpose all kinds of devices—of composition, of rhythm, of euphony, of suggestion—have to be availed of. And though, from an outward view, this may result in an appearance of artificiality, it makes the thing expressed even more true within us than it is in nature.

I say "more true" advisedly. The truths of nature, as embodi-

ments of ideas, are not only partial and transient, but promiscuously mixed up. The waves of phenomena rise and fall one over the other, irrespective of their importance, the trivial and momentous jostling one another in unregulated confusion. When the emotions of men are presented to us on this vast arena of nature, we have to make our own selections,—omitting unessentials, filling in gaps, making up the wholes we require with the help of our imagination.

Even our closest friend is not known to us in his completeness. Our memory, like an expert literary artist, leaves out a large part of his all, for if we had allowed our mind to be burdened with an impartial collection of all that is great as well as all that is small in him, we should have lost sight of his real self amidst such mass of heaped-up material, and should not have recognised him. For to recognise means to know after omitting that which is to be omitted and taking in that which is to be taken.

Also, as I have said, an element of enlargement comes in. After all, we see but little of our most intimate friend. His life, for the most part, is unknown to us. We are neither his shadow, nor do we dwell in his heart. Our imagination, therefore, has to work on the vast emptiness that is beyond our ken, filling in, ourselves, such parts of it as may be necessary in order to have a finished picture in our mind. The person in regard to whom our imagination does not work; about whom the gaps in our experience remain gaps; of whom so much only as is obtruded on our notice is clear to us, and that which is not remains vague;—him we do not know, or know but little. Most people in our world are thus for us but shades,—almost unreal. Most of them we know as physicians, or lawyers, or shopkeepers; not as men. That is to say, their relations with us are of the outside, their externals being for us the most important; with that part of them which is greater than these, we have nothing to do.

Literature is concerned to show us things in their wholeness—preserving that which is permanent, omitting that which is irrelevant; displaying the small as small, the big as big; making for coherence by filling in vacancies. As the mind makes its own selection from a superabundance of material, so does literature; neither of them, I repeat, are mirrors of the actual. The mind makes of the events in nature a mental world. Literature makes out of the products of the mind a literary world. And what thus eventually becomes literary form is far removed indeed from imitation of nature.

The methods of both mind and literature are much the same,

but there is also a difference. What is wrought by the mind is for its own purposes ; what literature creates is for the enjoyment of all. For oneself rough notes may be sufficient, but they have to be elaborated and set out in due sequence and relation in order to be comprehensible to every one. That which is to be displayed must be shown in the proper place, proper light, and proper pose, so that it may be evident to all. In a word, the reproduction in outward literary form of elements that were within the mind, amounts to an act of creation.

Moreover, the object of literature is not only to exhibit a view of our emotions and imaginations in the present time, but to establish them in all time. For which purpose their dimensions must be adjusted to the vastness of the background. And in such building up for perpetuity, albeit with materials gathered from the temporary, the measuring rod of any particular period will not serve. Hence the difference of scale that is found to obtain between the happenings of our narrow, contemporary world, and their reflection in high-class literature.

So we arrive at this : that the achievement of literature is to give outward form to that which was in the mind, to give language to that which was idea, to make universal that which was one's own, and to make immortal that which was of the moment. What the mind does with the outside world, the genius of the literary artist does with the mind. This genius, which may be called the Universal mind, gathers its materials from the world of mind, in order to fashion its own world.

But I am afraid we are getting into misty regions. Let me try, though I am not sure that I shall be able, to steer a clearer course.

We feel within us two distinct states of being : the one is our individuality, the other our humanity. Had my room been endowed with consciousness it would similarly have been separately conscious of the atmosphere within it as different from, and also as one with, the larger atmosphere outside. If the wall separating the two be impervious, it is for the soul like living in the dark depths of a well. In the case of the literary artist the dividing screen is of a transparent nature that does not operate as a bar to free intercourse. Moreover, it acts both as a microscopic and as a telescopic medium, making visible that which is invisible, and bringing the far near.

Such is the creative work done by the universal mind of the literary artist. It appropriates to itself the artist's individuality ; makes

the temporary permanent, and gives wholeness to the fragments of experience. The factory of the mind deals with nature, the universal mind deals with the products of the mind and therewith creates literature.

As we have seen, it is difficult to prove truth in the region of mind. It is easy to prove red to be red, for it is as red that it unquestionably appears to a large majority ; but it is not so easy to prove good to be good, for on that point it is hardly possible to produce the testimony of a majority holding the same opinion. Whence, also, a further problem arises. What is to be accepted as truly excellent? That which appears good to the many, or that which appears good to a select few ?

Apart from scientific strictness, it may be said of the physical world : That which is red to the majority is truly red. We know from practical experience that any difference of opinion in this regard is so small that we do not trouble actually to collect evidence. On the other hand, opinions differ so widely as to what is good or excellent, and how good it is, that the preliminary question of what kind of evidence will serve becomes hard enough to settle. The more so, because the makers of literature are not solely concerned with the present time, but address themselves to men of all time. How then can competent witnesses or jurymen be at all available in the present time ? It is most often seen that what is of the here and now is given predominant place by the generality of men. So if, when proceeding to try the truth of any piece of literature, we draw our jury from a particular period, the chances are that the verdict will be wrong.

Literary creations that have succeeded in maintaining their supremacy from age to age through the ever-changing cultures, ideas and circumstances of men, have alone survived the trial by ordeal of time. The world of mind not being directly apprehended by our senses, any attempt to separate the ephemeral from the lasting by taking a static view of a part of its incessant flow, is doomed to failure. The only way to arrive at a true judgment is, therefore, by testing the worth of a particular literary product amidst the grand exhibition of age-old masterpieces that have so survived.

Nevertheless, in the absence of some working method of appraisal, there would have been anarchy in the literary world. Judgments of lower tribunals are not necessarily upheld by the Supreme Court, nevertheless it is necessary that the former should go on performing their function. Similarly there must be courts of first instance

in the case of literature for arriving at tentative working judgments, pending the final decision which needs must take time. For, in spite of the risk of occasional failures of justice, the work must be carried on.

As in the making of literature, creative geniuses arise who sit on the throne of All-time as representative of all ages, so also are there geniuses amongst literary critics, endowed with a special talent for judging. The transient, the petty, cannot elude their keen discernment, while they are able to recognise at a glance the true, the everlasting. Owing to their profound acquaintance with the immortal treasures of literature they can instinctively test the quality of permanence in each element, on the touchstone of their inner experience. By reason of their natural and acquired gifts such are eminently fitted to be judges of eternal value.

On the other hand, we have also mere professional critics. Their equipment consists only of second-hand book learning. They sit at the door of the Temple at their self-appointed task of fussing about and shouting at those who come to worship, being equally proficient in the art of intimidating and taking bribes, but having no access to the inner sanctuary. They are naturally more often impressed with the equipage and finery of the new-comer. But the Divinity within admits to her presence many an unfortunate, scantily attired devotee, and gives them her blessing; smilingly forgiving them if, occasionally, they bespatter with their dust the hem of her lustrous robes. But what if She draws them to her bosom in spite of their outward indigence,—by what sign are the door-keepers to find out their worth? They can only judge the clothing, not the man. They are competent to give trouble, but have no authority to sit in judgment. Only those can function as ushers who are themselves true children of the Divine Mother. Who but a kinsman can fittingly welcome his kindred according to their rank?



SAPPHICS

I am one who travels through dreams forever,
Faith my staff and love my undwinding lantern,
With my own lone shadow for comrade, climbing
Summit on summit ;

No one knows the secret and winding pathways
I have trod through windy and woeful weathers ;
I have stood in the storm and striven with lightning
And overcome it :

Mile on mile of naked and lonesome roadway
And no voice to be heard or of bird or of being,
Bared of all save God, in the soul I have wandered
Through death and danger ;

Year by year a wonder has waxed within me,
Month by month I have flowered to a deeper vision,
Day by day I have grown in the truth of the spirit,
To earth a stranger.

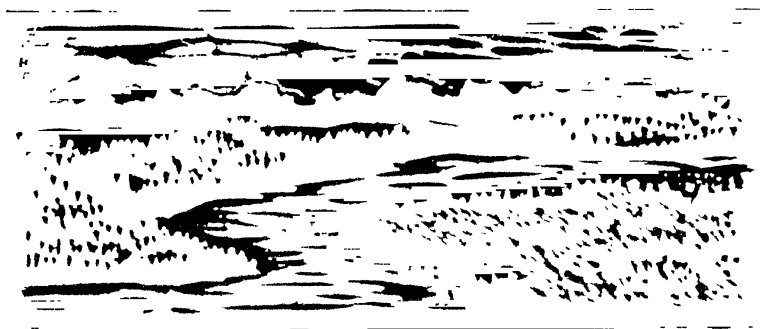
Now and then I have melted into rare marvels
Of new sight which left all creation unbodied,
Earth became a vanishing flame that was clay-void,
Sky became domeless,

When I felt of a sudden that I who had travelled
Lone and long without a home or relation,
Reached at last a spacious rest, and the spirit
Was no more homeless.

I am one who travels through glows forever,
Truth my staff and life my unfailing lantern,
With my bright light-shadow for comrade climbing
Peaks that are climbless,

See me go from silence to rarer silence,
Song by song bird-marking a cloudless azure
I have learned to make each transient moment
Home of the Timeless.

Harindranath Chattopadhyaya



THE ART OF MYSTICISM

Radhakamal Mukerjee

MUCH has been written of late years on the philosophy and psychology of religion. Primitive religion also has been for the last few decades the subject of detailed survey and examination. The recent advances of the child and abnormal psychology have contributed towards an adequate understanding of beliefs, cults and observances in savage society. Moreover, recent trends in the mental hygiene movement and in the developments of psychology tend to concentrate upon the abnormal aspects of religion. Unfortunately it is these very developments, which have stood in the way of a right appreciation of the role of religion in mature mentality and culture, and of a more scientific analysis of religion as basic in the elements of folk sociology. Sociology, erected upon a distinctly positive and materialistic basis by Comte and Spencer, has either neglected religion altogether, or has found it as a hindrance to social progress. The course of social evolution, on the other hand, shows that religion has been an indispensable instrument, which has aided man in the struggles of life ; it has elicited attitudes and modes of behaviour which have enabled society to meet some urgent need or survive a crisis. Hence religion has proved itself to be a valuable tradition, a working philosophy of life. Religion in the highest minds, where it is not conventional or institutional, has kept alive in society a faith in certain ultimate values which has also guaranteed social development towards higher levels. But to-day this is labelled as mysticism, which shares with magic, myth and miracle in common disrepute.

The conviction has gained ground that mysticism, which is the soul of living religion, implies aberration rather than normal growth of personality. This is mainly due to a tendency often manifest among the psychologists to view religious experience from a wrong perspective. Thus, from Ribot to Leuba and Freud, what is for the most part religious aberration or mania has been examined, though not without sympathy, and the result has been that religion is either discredited or regarded as illusory. For who will emulate the irruptive visions of saints and ascetics with minds wearing out as the result of voluptuous imaginings ? In all imaginative experiences there are higher and lower levels ; and as we do not condemn all art or poetry simply because

there are inferior examples, no more should we judge mysticism by its inferior or misguided phases only. The Psycho-Analytic school, which has detected phenomena of dissociation, repression and sublimation in the lives of many mystics, is hardly justified in presenting these as universal mystical states ; for there is a large mass of religious experience characterised, not by dissociation, conflict, repression or mere play of the process of suggestion but by the full participation of will or of consciousness. This experience should be regarded as the norm and the standard from which to judge mysticism. In the mystical consciousness many degrees or types have to be admitted. The healthy well-poised *yogi* making his life intense and ordered by deep introspection has little in common with the emotional instability of many mystics. Similarly the Buddhist or Christian missionary's equanimity and efficiency in welfare work are ample testimony of the stabilising effect of mysticism. Thus the methods of avoiding the dangers of mere dissociation and of achieving a harmony between intuition and discrimination, seen in all higher modes of mysticism, now deserve a close study.

A comparison of mystical consciousness in east and west indicates not only an order and development in religious experiences in less advanced culture but also a definite sequence in elevated worship and contemplation generally. There is in fact a general agreement among the mystics of all religions, eastern or western, about the character of the stages of experience and also with respect to the methods of inner discipline. Thus we are brought in touch with phenomena which can be regarded as objective. Mysticism begins everywhere with crises and raptures as part of experience of a personal God ; but in all higher religions, these are merely ephemeral. Mysticism gradually develops into a method of knowledge and action, which includes the whole of man's adjustment to the totality of life and the world that he apprehends. Starting with the practice of self-hypnosis and removal of all sources of inner conflict, the mystic integrates all the forces of the mind into a unity and reconciles himself with the community and with the totality of experience as a spiritual system. According to Gestalt, psychology, mind, its environment and its processes are an integral dynamic whole. Such a totality is, however, always full of disharmonies and tensions. The mystic by his strenuous contemplation resolves them into a harmony and balance, a meaningful poise. In his ardent search for totality, he stops at nothing short of transcending the self and the world. Then, if he finds the transcendent, he apprehends the totality with a triumphant affirmation "I AM". The

freedom of his mind from the ordinary restrictions of social existence is the avenue to unexpected revelations of community and harmony of self and the Universe. The universe and the mind become a mysterious whole, full and entire, and mysticism ends as it begins with the sentiment of wonder or mystery which the togetherness of things, the whole or holy pattern of the actualities of the world, elicits. A study of such normal mystical experiences will show that the religious person, with his greater sanity and freedom, orders his life better and attains greater heights and powers of personality than the average non-religious person.

So far as society is concerned, the religious person is also a greater asset, in as much as being a better judge of the true needs of human nature than the other, he discovers the source of social values. In the religious person, social values re-incarnate themselves ; in him the conflict of social ideals is completely resolved. It is he who leads society towards that full harmony and perfect concord which he obtains from his experience of God. This is far removed from the picture of the religious maniac abandoning himself in his isolation to the agitation and intoxication of the psycho-analyst's "sublimated desires" and "repressed complexes".

Nor has the philosophy of religion always encouraged an adequate interpretation of the relation between religion and society. It has developed a metaphysical doctrine of mysticism, which has found God bleak in his purity and orderliness, far remote from human wishes and wish-fulfilments. On the other hand, a positivist view, from Comte to Stanley Hall, projects man's values and ideals to society, and envisages an ideal system of human relations as the object of adoration. Here, an essential element of the mystic consciousness, viz. the sense of finality and acceptance is weak. The mystic's desire to rise above all relativities, which leads him, for instance, from immediate personal communion with God to the meditation of Pure Being, is baffled in a bare social conception of religion. Neither communion with a personal God nor contemplation of an ideal social order, where the mind is confined to the mere human or gregarious level, can give lasting or perfect satisfaction. On the other hand, a mind hypnotically absorbed in a vast emptiness, and denying all human relationships as unreal or evil, is a mind out of gear. In the highest phases of mystical consciousness, the intellect as well as the senses and the heart must be profoundly stirred. The intellect reaches its highest goal by meditating upon, and by absorption in, the Supreme Being, pure and absolute,

where there is no human or self reference. This is the sublimest height which the mystic can reach and which to ordinary person is unapproachable. The senses and the heart reach *their own* supreme goal when man can live and commune with the Supreme Being in its very intimate, very human patterns.

The types of mystical intuition and experience may be broadly marked out as follows : (1) There is a fervent mysticism, saturated with intense emotional satisfaction in which God appears in a concrete human pattern, and the mystic in his state of rapture can hardly distinguish between the apprehension of his unity with God and sensual and even sexually determined delight. Deep and delicate affections here blossom forth into spiritual love of which the species and types are as different as the various human relationships and the moods and temperaments of individuals. The schools of Hindu Bhakti, Persian, Sufi, Chinese and Japanese Tientai and Avatamsaka and Christian mysticism illustrate the wide emotional variations and antitheses of religion. (2) A variant of emotional mysticism is a cosmic (Nature) mysticism characterised by a sense of the whole and disappearance of the sense of separateness, accompanied by deep emotional satisfaction. Such ecstasy is, however, far different from the changeful and excited states of feeling elicited by the personal, modified God of worship. The personal deity is here superseded by the All Being into which the soul expands by breaking down all relativities. The finite is lost in the infinite, and nothing remains but an illumination and cosmic feeling. Religious introspection is, however, weak, and the relation between the finite and the infinite, the parts and the whole, is not brought into intimate touch with the development of the inner self or soul. (3) There is a cool unimpassioned mysticism in which the mystic, through his intuition, apprehends Reality as absolute and modeless, as the substance and matrix of the world, life and mind, as the oversoul, a mystical superlative of God, in which the contrast between the knowing subject and the known object is ultimately lost. The intimate, personal God of emotional mysticism recedes here also, and instead the Atman, Brahman, bhuta-tathata, Alaya-Vijnana, Tao or Sunyata is cherished by the self, finding its rest and freedom by mingling and interpenetrating with it. The proud utterances "I am the Brahman", "I am the heart of Wisdom", "I am Allah" or "I am that I am" alike reveal the exalted feeling of self-assertion associated with the majestic march of the soul to perfection, "God" being experienced in this march itself, the divine exist-

ence being no other than pure, supra-logical consciousness. (4) There is a fourth type of mysticism in which the quest of the soul and the quest of the Being, the way of knowledge and the way of love, are combined, and even in the attainment of complete self-knowledge, the profound mystery, majesty and grace of the Being are not missed. Upanishadic, Vedantic and Mahayana mysticisms illustrate this. Mysticism, as Otto observes, is by its nature "polar" and is not inconsistent.¹ Thus the mystic may alternately envisage God as the Deity beyond all modes, the Wholly Other, transcending the contrast between the conditioned and the unconditioned, or as interchangeably present as the all absorbing All or Over-soul or, again, as the Sweet Lover, and Friend of the finite self. How often is the mystical intuition grafted upon theism in the East and then the Wholly Other, Beyond Being and Not Being, is called God, and mystical and personal attitudes slip into one another. The same intuition of a fully mystical unity, characteristic of the most elevated stages of meditation, underlies the faith in personal divinity in a lower stage of experience. Thus the vision of identity or its various grades or stages alternate with determined acts of worship, and personal communion, equal in value for the mystic to the identity consciousness.

It is in the alternating journeys of the soul that the mystic experiences the sense of awe and creatureliness as well as the most exalted feeling and powerful exercise of the will and abolishes the contrast between mystical quietism and an abundant life of love and service. For the true mystic the relationship of the one to the many is one of the most live polarity, and thus the most profound quiet and the most strenuous life can inter-penetrate each other. It is thus that mystical intuitions differ between man and man according to his religious traditions, moods and stages of elevated meditation. Yet though the intellect and the senses and the heart may apprehend the Reality in different ways and in different degrees of intensity, from which may result contrasted dogmas or philosophies, such as those of *Kaibalayam*, nirvana, transcendence, immanence or incarnation, the Reality Itself is above the flux of temperaments, stages and states of consciousness, above all contrasts and contradictions. The paradoxes, indeed, illustrate the limitation of human experience ; and thus the theory of Reality given by mystics of different religions is couched often in paradoxical and self-contradictory terms.

1. Otto : Idea of the Holy ; also, *Mysticism of East and West*.

In whatever manner the reality is experienced by different types of mysticism, each kind of mysticism furnishes the ground of a distinct type of ethic. Emotional mysticism derives its zest and co-ordination from the various loyalties in domestic and social life, and ultimately recoils upon and transfigures the mystic's own obligations towards society and his environment. Similarly the mystical identification of self with soul Brahman, or Pure Being also engenders characteristic ethical attitudes. Where the emphasis is merely upon a modeless Godhead as Alone and completely transcendent, there may be tendency to regard the world as wholly evil and as an error or illusion with corresponding neglect of the social order and obligations. On the other hand, where the consciousness of transcendence is accompanied by a consciousness of the vital immanence of the One, there is a dynamic interpenetration of logic and action, intellectual mysticism and moral ideal.

Mysticism is not merely a way of understanding ; it is also a way of life. For even in the most elevated mysticism the herald of knowledge experiences a unity of feeling, a calm and pure love, joy and blessedness based on unity of being ; he apprehends that unity not merely in the depth of his understanding but also in his relations to his fellow creatures as the surpassing *anandam*, good and beautiful. It is thus not in world-flight but in the active participation of the divine love, will or righteousness that the philosophical mystic's identity with Being bears fruit. For the mystic God shines through all fellowmen and all have become God. The Bhagavad Gita thus recommends the ethic of strong and manly action through a unifying of the will with the divine purpose, nay, through the identification of the individual in his fellow-creatures and of all fellow-creatures in the individual. Says also the Sutta Nipata, "As I am, so are these. As these are, so am I. Thus identifying himself with others the wise man neither kills nor causes to be killed." The mystic vision of the one in the many and the many in the one accordingly supplies the deep and broad foundations of ethics.

Mysticism posits eternal values such as Truth, Beauty and Goodness, which are all infinite, and which transcend any system of human relations, but it finds these actualized in concrete human situations and experiences. To realize these ultimate values, it often borrows its symbols and imageries from the intimacies of human love and aspiration ; but in return it recompenses society a hundred-fold by raising the latter to the highest value-plane. Religion which nourishes

shes itself on the heart's desires throws open a new super-human channel wherein lie true safety and profound peace. It is from here that it imports a compelling vision of truth or goodness and ideal of human destiny. Law, public opinion or religious convention may be thrown to the winds in the mystic's critical judgment of institutions, based as it is on a true perception of final as opposed to instrumental values. The mystic has proved indispensable in history because he subjects not only all categories of social experience, but also all assumed postulates and conceptual standards to constant scrutiny in the illumination of absolute or eternal values. His capacity for guidance is born of a sense of the whole, a freedom from inertia and prejudice, an inner certainty and a simplicity of will,—invaluable qualifications for chalking out social policies and programmes. Thus it is those, whose vision extends beyond the bounds of the social order to limitless vistas of value and experience, who sustain and renew society, give it an unerring lead, and endow it with an unswerving faith.

The relation between mysticism and social values is therefore a vital subject of social thinking, especially in an age where the process of evolution is still chaotic. Most of the social sciences are suffering from the confusion of standards of valuation ; chiefly because sociology has not been able as yet to establish a unity of the concept of value, rendering impossible constructive thought in economic, ethical or religious or any special field of social activity. When the consciousness of the social sciences is fully impregnated with the consciousness of the highest values, the differences between the mechanical and the ideal, between the evolutionary and the spiritual, may be composed. No adequate and comprehensive theory of social progress, which is the task of social philosophy to envisage, can afford to neglect the considerations of religion ; and sociology, which regards all phenomena of human society as its province should no longer relegate to the philosophy of religion alone the task of attempting a comprehensive formulation of the goal of man's collective effort and aspiration.



THE PILGRIM *

FROM over the rim of the sea, from far lands,
Through the fading sleepy sky, there floats a shadow,
A shadow without shape, that follows no earthly form,
But is a presence of itself ; the shadow of night.
And along the sands, from round dusk-hidden headlands,
There creeps a hush, a lonely stillness, like snow
In its flight.
And ceaselessly through the silence, there flows
The quiet deep voice of the moody seas,
As they talk to the man in the shadows,
Who hears, and yet hears not, and sees
Without sight.

Evening brings love and rest and peace,
And peace, rest and love intermingle in the fleeing
Winds, in the fading wash of the sunset's sweep,
In the rhythmic beat of the waves' swinging,
And over the dim sands, where sounds cease
In echoless folds of gloom.
And thoughtfulness steals along the slope
Behind the shore, and into the unseen hills ;
The brooding thoughtfulness of sleep.
And the man moves not in the shadows.

Does he remember or forget, or pray, or hope,
Or know faith, or having faith, dream ?
Does he hear the voice of the sea, or feel
The stirring of the sands, or see the gleam
Of the wave-crests in the moon rays, or speak
To the stars, or long for love ?

* After Mr. Tagore's picture of the same name.

No. His senses are senseless. He is transcended
By himself. He hears the voice within the sea,
And feels a presence along the sands,
And sees a phantom ship passing, wafted
On wings of mist, light as a summer cloud.
He speaks to the soul of himself,
Of the night, of the earth,
To the soul of love ;
He communes with God.

H. Colville-Stewart



W. B. YEATS AND THE IRISH MOVEMENT •

Ranald Newson

It was said of Sappho by the Ancient World that she "made friends" with her books. That is to say, she did not, like Dryden, sing of political events ; nor, like Tennyson, did she commemorate oleographic maidens of great virtue but without any basis in reality. Nor did she, like Wordsworth, discourse in a vague and somewhat clerical manner of mountains, brooks and what not ; nor, like Browning, did she harp on the one rather ominous string of moral uplift.

In her great poetry she throws herself before us and says: "This is I, Sappho, and such were those I loved and hated." And in this sense Yeats is a Sapphic poet, for he has torn aside the veil that separates each one of us from our fellow-men, and, alike in verse and prose, he has told us the story of his life and the story of his heart. The tragic nature of this story is no mere open secret. At one time he whispered it to the Wind among the Reeds. Latterly he has shouted it abroad through the megaphone of the Modernists in whose ranks he has suddenly and dramatically appeared.

The writings of W. B. Yeats are so closely connected with the history of Ireland, that it would not be possible to discuss them without first giving a sketch of those events which form such a tragic background to his poems.

When Yeats was first putting his dreams and visions into words, Ireland had for seven hundred years been connected politically with Great Britain, and for nearly a century its political capital had been not Dublin but London. For a hundred years there had been a steadily accumulating growth of Irish Nationalism. This expressed itself in many ways, varying between the sheer heroism of Lord Edward Fitz Gerald and Robert Emmet and the ruthlessness of the Phoenix Park murders. The situation was very complicated. A vast body of Irishmen were painfully apathetic. The richer land owners and those persons in the North of Ireland who are of Scottish extraction, eagerly desired that the Union between the Sister Countries should be maintained. On the other hand, many perfectly good and loyal Englishmen be-

* Delivered as a lecture to the students at Santiniketan.

lieved that the only solution to the tragic events of the seven centuries was for England and Ireland to part company for good.

So things stood in April 1916, when Sir Roger Casement and two followers landed from a German submarine on the West Coast of Ireland. Historically it was without parallel that a little army of three quixotic individuals should hope to oppose the forces of the British Empire. The noble Sir Roger Casement who, throughout his life had played the double role of saint and hero, was captured, taken to London and hanged. But, simultaneously, a small body of Irish Nationalists, led by poets and schoolmasters, had risen in Dublin, and fought for their country's independence with a heroism hitherto only to be found in the pages of Homer. Out of this week of desperate fighting, the modern Free State of Ireland was destined to be founded. But, at that time, as one by one the sixteen leaders of the Easter Week Rebellion were led out and shot, it seemed that they had given their blood in vain.

Yeats had known these simple, brave men ; and he writes of them thus :

I have met them at close of day
Coming with vivid faces
From counter or desk among grey
Eighteenth-century houses.
I have passed with a nod of the head
Or polite meaningless words,
Or have lingered awhile and said
Polite meaningless words ;
And thought before I had done
Of a mocking tale or a gibe
To please a companion
Around the fire at the club,
Being certain that they and I
But lived where motley is worn :
All changed, changed utterly :
A terrible beauty is born.

Then Yeats refers to individuals among these slain Irishmen. One, he said, had "kept a school and rode our wingèd horse." This one was Patrick Pearse and the wingèd horse was Pegasus of the poets ; but it is for his courage rather than his poems that Pearse will be remembered, for his verses are halting, while his courage was superhuman. From his boyhood up Pearse had but two wishes—that he should guide the Irish back to their own language, and that he

should give his life for Ireland's sake. The son of an Irish mother and an English father, on the day that he was shot dead he had his greater wish fulfilled, nor could he have desired to meet death in better company. So Yeats has celebrated him and his fellows:

This man had kept a school
And rode our wingèd horse ;
This other his helper and friend
Was coming into his force ;
He might have won fame in the end,
So sensitive his nature seemed,
So daring and sweet his thought.
This other man I had dreamed
A drunken, vain-glorious lout.
He had done most bitter wrong
To some that are near my heart,
Yet I number him in the song ;
He, too, has resigned his part
In the casual comedy ;
He, too, has been changed in his turn,
Transformed utterly :
A terrible beauty is born.

Then he comes to an unforgettable passage, as he murmurs name upon name of these Irish martyrs, "as a mother names her child when sleep at last has come on limbs that had run wild."

We know their dream ; enough
To know they dreamed and are dead ;
And what if excess of love
Bewildered them till they died ?
I write it out in a verse—
MacDonagh and MacBride,
And Connolly and Pearse
Now and in time to be,
Wherever green is worn,
Are changed, changed utterly :
A terrible beauty is born.

There is a story told of the Irish. A famous Society once offered a prize for the best essay on the Elephant. Men of several nationalities competed. After four years the German had finished a large volume entitled, "Introductory remarks prior to a Treatise on the Elephant." It took the Englishman four months to write his essay, profusely

illustrated with photographs which he called, "Elephant-shooting in the British Empire." The American took only four weeks to complete his work which he styled, "Bigger and Better Elephants." The Frenchman brought out a book after four days, with a colourful picture on the front cover, called, "Loves of the Elephant." But the Irishman was quickest of all. Four hours from the announcement of the competition he had produced a fiery oration on "Elephants and the Irish Question."

And so Nationalism takes many forms. In certain hitherto blessed parts of the world it recommends the insane foolery of the Western industrial system. Nationalism in Germany has turned an ex-waiter into a Dictator; in England it has dressed Sir Oswald Mosley in black shirt and gaiters, in which apparel he parades dejectedly through a hailstorm of missiles and abuse, followed by his little army of pale and resolute youths, mostly of foreign extraction. But the Nationalism of the Irish is a different matter. It is physical; it is the love of a man for a woman. And in all ages of Irish history the Irish poets have called their land by the names of women,—calling her the dark Rosaleen, or Cathleen the daughter of Houlihan. So Yeats writes of Ireland that "he has hidden in his heart the flame out of her eyes," and "he has bent low and low and kissed her quiet feet."

Just as at one time the eyes of the Gods looked Troyward, so during these stirring times it was Ireland that absorbed their gaze. And they sent to Ireland a woman that seemed divinely incarnated; a woman of such stature that she seemed a very giantess, and of such beauty that she seemed fabulous, or as Yeats said, "like a Goddess fallen into our mortal infirmity." This is how Yeats writes of this violent woman who was destined by her glamour and her gift of speech to rouse the people of Ireland to arms and action:

She might, so noble from head
To great shapely knees
The long flowing line,
Have walked through the holy images
At Pallas Athene's side,
Or been fit spoil for a centaur,
Drunk with the unmixed wine.

So also in his incomparable prose :

"If her face, like the face of a Greek statue, showed little thought, her whole body seemed a masterpiece of long labouring thought, as

though a Scopas had measured and calculated, consorted with Egyptian sages, and mathematicians out of Babylon, that he might outface even Artemesia's sepulchral image with a living norm."

How many centuries spent
The sedentary soul
In toil of measurement
Beyond eagle or mole,
Beyond hearing or seeing,
Or Archimedes' guess,
To raise into being
That loveliness ?

So he wrote of this woman whose soul was such a tumult, and who was later to be known as the Irish Joan of Arc. Maud Gonne was her name, and in her youth, before sterner calls had come her way, the love of the young Irish poet was not unacceptable to her. Side by side these two lovers, so different in character and vision, worked for Ireland and spoke for Ireland.

Sweetheart, do not love too long :
I loved long and long,
And grew to be out of fashion
Like an old song.

All through the years of our youth,
Neither could have known
Their own thought from the other's,
We were so much at one.

But, O in a minute she changed—
O do not love too long,
Or you will grow out of fashion
Like an old song.

So in a poem of a queer bitter humour he addressed her when she had married the Irish hero, MacBride, who was later to be shot for his part in the Easter Week Rising. But his utter desolation found expression in other poems :

I wander by the edge
Of this desolate lake
Where wind cries in the sedge :
Until the axle break
That keeps the stars in their round,

And hands hurl in the deep
 The banners of East and West,
 And the girdle of light is unbound,
 Your breast will not lie by the breast
 Of your beloved in sleep.

Or he cries to the curlew to cease crying in the air, because its crying brings to his mind

Passion-dimmed eyes and long heavy hair
 That was shaken out over my breast:
 There is enough evil in the crying of wind.

Once he pleads for her compassion in a poem of very great loveliness :

But I, being poor, have only my dreams ;
 I have spread my dreams under your feet:
 Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

And once he curiously mixes his own story with old fables and his long quest for his beloved reappears in a strange and beautiful fancy, which ends with these marvelously sad and tender lines:

Though I am old with wandering
 Through hollow lands and hilly lands,
 I will find out where she has gone,
 And kiss her lips and take her hands ;
 And walk among long dappled grass,
 And pluck till time and times are done
 The silver apples of the moon,
 The golden apples of the sun.

Like the Ireland she personified, the life of Maud Gonne was one of stormy tragedy. Though MacBride, her husband, died as a soldier, a rebel and a hero, he was, none the less, in Yeats' bitter phrase, a drunken, vain-glorious lout. He subjected his wife to much shame and humiliation. In her despair she sought shelter in the friendship of Yeats. He received her with infinite pity ; and when she has told her tale, he will hear no more of the sad queens and afflicted princesses of legend.

Because of a story I heard under a thin horn
 Of the third moon, that hung between the night and day,
 To dream of women whose beauty was folded in dismay,
 Even in an old story, is a burden not to be borne.

In another poem called *Reconciliation*, he tells her :

Dear, cling close to me. Since you were gone
 My barren thoughts have chilled me to the bone.

And sometimes it seemed to him as if once more they were lovers as in the old days.

O hurry to the hollow wood, for there
I will drive out the deer and moon and cry—
O my share of the world, O yellow hair,
No one has ever loved but you and I !

But more often he saw things in their stark reality—the ruined lives of both of them in a world where very little seemed made to please. In this mood he wrote his dream :

I swayed upon the gaudy stern
The butt end of a steering oar,
And saw wherever I could turn
A crowd upon a shore.

And though I would have hushed the crowd,
There was no mother's son but said,
'What is the figure in a shroud
Upon a gaudy bed ?'

Though I'd my finger on my lip,
What could I but take up the song ?
And running crowd and gaudy ship
Cried out the whole night long,

Crying amid the glittering sea,
Naming it with ecstatic breath,
Because it had such dignity
By the sweet name of Death.

Life had now become too brutal for Yeats to face. He took refuge in the ancient legends of Ireland, and in his dreams; and though the image of Maud Gonne still haunted his poetry, he saw her, as he was later to see himself, as a legendary figure. In a lovely play, called *The Shadowy Waters*—his most perfect play till he started to write his little Plays for Dancers—he tells one of his dreams. He goes out into the great seas, steering his ship farther into the unknown waters, searching for his beloved. And when he finds her, they will not return to the old life. The sailors leave them on the abandoned vessel that drifts on into the unknown, and he kneels and the woman covers his eyes with her hair. And he calls to her in what I believe to be the simplest and the most beautiful image in all our poetry:

O silver fish that my two hands have taken
Out of the running stream.

Not so happy as the hero of this wistful story Yeats lived to see
the changing years pass over his beloved. Already he had sung how
certain bent old men, seeing the waters drifting by, had cried in
lament :

All that's beautiful drifts away
Like the waters.

And now :

I thought of your beauty, and this arrow,
Made out of a wild thought, is in my marrow.
There's no man may look upon her, no man,
As when newly grown to be a woman,
Blossom pale, she pulled down the pale blossom
At the moth hour and hid it in her bosom.
This beauty's kinder, yet for a reason
I could weep that the old is out of season.

Or as he says in that lovely poem which he called *Broken Dreams*:

Your beauty can but leave among us
Vague memories, nothing but memories.
A young man, when the old men are done talking,
Will say to an old man, "Tell me of that lady
The poet stubborn with his passion sang us
When age might well have chilled his blood.

But at this time the loves and dreams of the poet were being
drowned by a fiercer music :

Red lips are not so red
As the stained stones kissed by the English dead.

Young Wilfred Owen was singing from the trenches :

Heart, you were never hot
Nor large nor full like hearts made great with shot.

And Yeats' only reply was the taciturn comment :

I think it better that in times like these
A poet keep his mouth shut.

Then he turned back to the solitude of his study and to his
lovely haunting melodies.

Others, because you did not keep
That deep-sworn vow, have been friends of mine;
Yet always when I look death in the face,
When I clamber to the heights of sleep,

Or when I grow excited with wine,
Suddenly I meet your face.

It was as a queen that he had come to think of her, or sometimes as the heroic woman-figure of Ireland herself. And now tragedy was to fall at once on the country he loved and the woman he adored. To add to the bloodshed that during these years had saturated the soil of Europe, fighting broke out in the streets of Dublin. It was fighting that had its heroic side, its sordid side, even its comic side. The poet MacDonagh, leading seven hundred Irish rebels, made an impetuous charge, and captured a biscuit factory without sustaining any losses. Several days after the others had capitulated, one schoolmaster remained with his little party of rebels, firing from a mill till his face was black with powder. This was DeValera, now president of the Irish Free State. The youthful poet Joseph Plunkett, author of the eternal poem, "I see his blood upon the rose," was at this time dying of consumption. He rose from his sick bed and took his stand with the rest. Sentenced to death, he was married to his betrothed in the condemned cell, and led out and shot the next morning. With him Maud Gonne's husband, the brutal and fearless MacBride, was also shot.

So after a passion of thirty years standing the two lovers were free to consummate these long years of grief and suffering in marriage. But this was never to be. The stars that crossed the loves of Beatrice and Dante were once more in the ascendant. As Yeats himself has said,

Nothing we love overmuch
Is ponderable to our touch.

When old age came to Yeats he might have thought himself a happy man. By the despised trade of poets, he had won fame and fortune. He had scattered with lavish hands the blossoms of his genius. They said of Sappho that each of her poems was a rose, and of no other writer till the time of Yeats could this be said. Wide indeed were his achievements. He had done what none before but Dante and Landor had done: he had won a double crown in verse and prose. Though it is as a poet that his name will live, if he had written none of his lovely verse, the heritage of his prose—in his youth of a curious enchanted fancy, and now in his age, to adapt his own phrase: with beauty like a tightened bow, a kind that is not natural in an age like this, being high and solitary and most stern—the heritage of his prose could be sufficient to place him among the very greatest Masters of our literature.

Likewise, though his lyrics are peculiarly his own and couched

in a wandering rhythm that he himself had devised and given to the world, as a dramatist his achievement might seem to fall little below Shakespeare's. Ignored in his youth, ridiculed in his middle age, he was now hailed as a Prince of Poets and the acknowledged leader of a group of Irish writers that included the great names of Lady Gregory, J. M. Synge, and George Russell. He was, moreover, the owner of a beautiful old Irish castle. He had married a young Irish girl, and had two children.

In days when fortune had been harsher to him he could write thus:

The little fox he murmured,
'Oh what of the world's bane ?'
The sun was laughing sweetly,
The moon plucked at my rein ;
But the little red fox murmured,
'O do not pluck at his rein,
He is riding to the townland
That is the world's bane.'

In even younger days when he was often hungry and penniless, he could write:

Shy one, shy one,
Shy one of my heart,
She moves in the firelight
Pensively apart.
She carries in the dishes
And lays them in a row.
To an isle in the water,
With her would I go.

For it was

Laughter, not time, destroyed my voice
And put that crack in it.

In a quaint note to his Autobiographies, Yeats dedicates the book to those few, mainly personal friends, who have read all that he has written. And it is possible to read and re-read many times all that he has written in verse and prose during his long life, for there is not a line that has not that "uncontrollable energy and daring of the great creators" of which he himself has spoken. In such a paper as this one can but pluck a few of those silver apples of the moon and golden apples of the sun that hang, as it were, from the luminous boughs of Yeats' poetry.

Not till one has lived with his books for months on end, not till they have become a most intimate part of one's consciousness will this master-singer be seen in his true perspective—as the peer of Sappho and Homer. He began in Celtic mists, and for a long time his admirers spoke of him as the poet of the twilight. But gradually his intellectual fibre has hardened ; he has wandered into a great waste of snows. Here the same image still pursues him, but he sings to her now in a new poetry—poetry that depends more upon the intensity of its rhythm than the actual meaning of its words, for at first sight the words might seem the mutterings of a madman:

As the moon sidles up
So must she sidle up,
As trips the scared moon,
Away must she trip.
'His light had struck me blind
Dared I stop.'
She sings as the moon sings,
'I am I, am I,
The greater grows my light
The further that I fly.'
All creation shivers
With that sweet cry.



THE PAINTINGS OF RABINDRANATH

Nandalal Bose

THE paintings of Rabindranath have provoked quite a number of criticisms, both favourable and adverse ; or rather comments, for it is quite apparent that the critics have, for some reason or other, stopped short of committing their views with regard to their artistic quality. I mean to run the risk of committing my views on this subject of Rabindranath's art, in this short paper, although these views are necessarily personal to me ; in fact, it will not be so much declaring them, as confessing them. And as I do not presume to make a critical study of his artistic talents, I am under no obligation to disown the intuitive origin of the remarks I shall make. To reject them or to accept them is, as usual, the privilege of the public.

The more I see of Rabindranath's pictures the more grows on me the conviction that in him we have one of those great artists who bring pure genius to bear on their work. In his paintings we discover a new style of "expression." In the course of the numerous exhibitions that we have been holding all over India of our School of Art at Santiniketan, I have been often asked, by artists and educated laymen alike, whether I regarded his paintings as genuine works of art or simply as so many whims of a genius. My consistent reply to all of them has been that the paintings of Rabindranath which they saw were real works of art by a real artist of genius, and I repeat that it is a great fortune for Bengal, and for India as a whole, that he is what he is.

Every one is familiar with the fact of the renaissance in Indian Art in recent times, and the name of Abanindranath Tagore who led it ; but what is not commonly recognised is the regrettable fact that within a very short time our new generation of young artists are already showing their susceptibility to decadence. The new life that Abanindranath gave is in danger of dying, as it were, of languor. The danger, however, need not leave us despairing, for the new tendency, though real, is not inevitable, there being nothing in the art of the great founder to make it certain. The danger is due to causes which we can easily discover and, if we so wish, avoid. Our young artists seem to be suffering from an over-eagerness to announce themselves as artists, long before their training in observation and technical study has reached maturity, and what is more unfortunate, their immature

productions have won for them easy recognition and patronage of a public that is indifferent to art and art-values. The public is familiar with a certain subject matter of art, which when it recognises in the pictures of these artists, it readily pours out its applause. The artist is flattered, the public is charmed, and the vicious circle grows. We have, therefore, reason to hail with gratitude the advent of an artist whose genius has released the torrential flood that is necessary to sweep away the shallow claims of uncertain talent. We may resent the assault of this flood of genius. But for how long ?

Furthermore, people have asked me whether we acknowledge Rabindranath's paintings as part of our Bengal School of Art. My answer is: How can we repudiate that which is likely to regenerate us ? In Rabindranath's art we may discern all the essential developments of great art ; and, in particular, that great quality of freshness and vigour which makes the old new, and which should be of particular significance to our younger artists. He is of Bengal, and though, in this as in other respects, he has given more than he has taken and inspired more than he has shared,—for such is the mark of all genius—that very genius cannot be taken to disentitle us from claiming him as our own.

This observation, of course, is an individual opinion, and I neither claim nor wish to coerce others to my way of thinking. My view, for what it is worth, may be elaborated thus. Rabindranath's pictures, though they are intensely personal in the sense that they are strongly marked with his personality, do, nevertheless, produce in the mind of an artist reactions that are impersonal or universal. It is the spirit of his art which evokes these unmistakable reactions that I wish to emphasise and recommend to our younger artists. I do not by any means claim that the technical style that Rabindranath has developed for himself will give rise to a new school of painting. On the contrary I should like to point out that a number of artists belonging to the Bengal School who have tried to imitate his style have consistently failed. Their failure is not surprising if we bear in mind the fact that what is individual to an artist can never be successfully imitated, and that if we want to learn from a genius we must look to the spirit of his creative activity.

I have said that in Rabindranath's art we can discern elements that are altogether new to our School of Art ; by that I do not mean that he has evolved a new kind of creative activity. Indeed, there is a sense in which it would be true to say that no new elements can be

added to creative activity in art. I simply mean that he has given new emphases and new ways of achieving them. His technique, even apart from what is peculiarly personal to him, discloses a new approach to the object of art. And he has created, what very few have created before, a splendidly bewildering variety of forms.

Here the reader will forgive me a few words on the technical side of art. Every picture can be conceived as divided into a number of component elements which, taken together, give us an impression of the artistic whole. Five of the most important elements are : (1) the idea or the subject, which in other words would mean the real purpose or significance of a work of art ; (2) craftsmanship or technique ; (3) adjustment of the different parts, i. e. balance, etc., or architectural construction ; (4) surface quality or treatment ; and lastly that subtle, elusive and indefinable quality that pervades all the parts and gives to the work of art its "life." These are, as we have already observed, different parts of one indivisible whole and cannot be separated save for the purpose of mental analysis.

Now, it appears that artists, in the vast majority of cases, both here and elsewhere, begin the creative process with the subject or idea, and then proceed to execute the rest. But Rabindranath, it seems, often begins creating even before the subject has taken any conscious form in his mind and might easily lead one to suppose that mere craftsmanship or mere architectural design or the mere effect of colours were his end, but when the picture is complete we discover all the essential constituents of a work of art in it, all blended in one subject and pervaded by that rhythm of life which the hand of genius alone can impart. And that is why his paintings are always real, though rarely realistic. We may not therefore dub them as mere whims of a genius when all the essentials of great art are present in them, even though the traditional process of creative activity is reversed or disturbed. If popular opinion still looks askance at his works, that is, of course, due to the popular belief that the subject or the idea is the main thing in a picture. Like other popular beliefs, this too is not infallible. Artists are well aware that even when one starts with a definite idea, the process of creative activity works such subtle changes in it and compels such a transformation of it that in the end it emerges as a mere subsidiary factor in creative art. In Rabindranath's art the idea is aggressively, though not always consciously, ignored and allowed to take care of itself at the end ; which gives to his work its peculiar quality.

It is this quality which I particularly want to bring to the notice of the younger generation of our Bengal School of Art. Our artists of late times, as I have already observed, have shown a tendency to stifle art within very narrow confines by attaching exaggerated value to subject-matter and mannerisms of style, ignoring the others essentials of the artistic whole ; which tendency fetches easy appreciation from a public, always ready to go into ecstasy over an idea that is near to their hearts. We, therefore, need be re-educated, as it were, into the fundamental values of art, and none can do it better than he who is creating before our very eyes forms whose originality baffles our classifications, and whose vigour compels the admiration of the artist, though it may distress the complacency of the critic ? If Rabindranath seems rough and destructive, it is because he is breaking the ground anew for us that our future flowers may be more surely assured of their sap.

His revolt against tradition is more apparent than real, for he has kept more true to the creative impulse than those who congratulate themselves on their orthodoxy. The popular mind is always scared by the unconventional ; it is used to thinking in terms of fixed images ; and because Rabindranath's genius is solitary and singular, and its force is often eruptive like that of a volcano, as Abanindranath once happily described it, he has to suffer the common destiny of great geniuses, namely, to let time educate people to appreciate his gifts. One may recall in this connection the lukewarm, almost cold, reception that was accorded to the founder of our School of Art, Abanindranath Tagore

I may be charged with having said much and explained nothing. When I said that Rabindranath's art is real, though not realistic, I was conscious of having exposed myself to the challenge to define what exactly I meant by "real." If I am unwilling to take up the challenge, it is not because of want of conviction on my part but because I know only too well that even geniuses with gift of literary expression have not succeeded in defining this most elusive of all concepts. I am only an humble artist to whom words have never been his medium of expression. But I should like to quote here what Rabindranath once said in a private talk, that whatever might be the definition of Reality, one of its characteristics was that it always compelled attention, and the more one looked at it the more surely was the recognition compelled. It is true that what is merely curious and odd also draws attention, but while the attraction of the merely novel and fanciful wears off, that of

the "real" grows. And though, I am willing to admit, there is an element of the curious and even of the grotesque about Rabindranath's pictures, there is so much of the "real" in them that the attention instead of wearying gains in intensity and in understanding. The pictures begin to explain themselves. That is why I am eager that our young artists should study his works with heart, though I am indifferent to what the critics, addicted to theories, may say of them.



HINDU SOCIAL ORGANIZATION :

A Speculative Essay

Nirmal Kumar Bose

THOSE who have studied the institution of caste, cannot have failed to notice how intimately it was once connected with the economic organization of India. Caste had something to do with religious belief and spiritual privileges ; it had an intimate bearing upon social position ; but it had a still more important relation with the production and distribution of wealth in ancient India. There are some scholars who maintain that caste had not much to do with the economic structure of society. If at all there was any connection, it was only by way of secondary influence: the caste system was not primarily and principally an economic organization. But according to others, it is the other way round. Caste is essentially an economic organization ; and its racial, social or spiritual aspects are merely secondary accretions which have gathered round a central economic core. This second school of sociologists even concede that, in its earlier stages, caste may have been a racial affair, an organization designed to mark off the conquerors from the conquered ; but they are stubborn on the point that, later on, and for a long and important period in its history, it functioned principally as an economic organization. It determined men's occupations and fixed their status in society in accordance with the nature of those occupations.

The Economic Organization of Caste.

Even a cursory examination of the Census Reports reveals to us the fact that most castes have a traditional calling. When a Muchi or shoemaker is found as a farm-labourer, he confesses that his traditional calling is working in leather, and that he has perhaps been forced to take up his present occupation because his traditional one is no longer paying. Thus a Kamar is a blacksmith ; a Kayastha, by tradition, is a clerk in Bengal, even though he may actually deal in leather, boots and shoes. If we follow back the history of the castes through the past, as recorded in the law-books of ancient India, we find that the need of a clear differentiation of occupations was recognised quite early in India. This differentiation of occupations was a

great step in her economic evolution. In the Vedic period, members of the same family used to follow various occupations. Thus the son of a poet or a professional bard could be a carpenter or a trader. But later on, more strictness was introduced in the choice of occupations. Formerly the State did not probably interfere in the matter of this choice. But it ceased to be so in later times. The authority of the State increased ; whilst the advantages of a clear differentiation of occupations in securing better production were also recognised ; and strict rules were introduced with regard to the choice of occupations. In the time of the Manu Samhita, a tradition had been built up that particular castes were to follow particular occupations. Not that any change of occupation was totally tabooed ; but, in every case, a departure was clearly recognised as an exceptional practice or an *apaddharma*, only to be followed when it was not possible to follow the traditional one. It is a note-worthy fact that more strictness was enjoined with regard to the trading and labouring castes than the professional or the priestly ones. "Thus Manu lays down that (the king) should carefully compel Vaisyas and Sudras to perform the work (prescribed) for them ; for if those two (castes) swerved from their duties, they would throw this (whole) world into confusion." The Sukraniti, too, states in the same strain: "Every caste should practise the duties that have been mentioned as belonging to it and that have been practised by ancestors, and should otherwise be punished by kings." (Majumdar : *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, p. 385).

The enforcement of a fixed occupation upon each *jati* or caste was perhaps not very rigid in practice ; there may have been frequent departures from the rule. But the careful way in which the tradition of close correspondence between *jati* and occupation was built up, is a clear indication of what the leaders of Hindu society had in their mind. They believed in the hereditary transmissibility of character (Manu : IX, 33-5 ; X: 9, also 59) ; and so they thought it best to affix permanently particular occupations upon particular *jatis*. There is no denying the fact that ancient social leaders did succeed in enforcing this rule to a very large extent. In later ages, the *jatis* themselves refused to give up their traditional occupation, and when any particular part of it was compelled to do so, the caste-assemblies often marked off such a section of the parent body as a distinct outgrowth, and, ultimately, by enforcing the rule of endogamy upon it, they successfully converted it into a new *jati* altogether.

A Racial Question.

The jatis which thus grew up along with the differentiation of occupations, were marked off from one another by rules preventing intermarriage and interdining. Each jati was made endogamous, and an elaborate set of rules grew up in course of time, as to what article of food or drink one jati could take from another and what it could not. Similar differentiation of occupations have taken place in other parts of the world. There was differentiation in Europe in the Middle Ages, and the advantages of monopoly in the different crafts were also recognised. But the guilds of Europe did not grow into castes. The hard and fast rules regarding interdining and intermarriage, which we find in India, did not grow up there. Why was this so ?

We must notice here the fact that just as there was differentiation of occupation among the Brahminical peoples themselves, so there was another important factor working side by side with it. With the advance of the Brahminical peoples across the plains of India, the aboriginal inhabitants of the land were pushed back into the hills and jungles of Central and Southern India ; or they were absorbed within Hindu society. There was also considerable intermixture between the conqueror and the conquered and numerous half-castes grew up in the train of the conquerors. When the aboriginals and the half-castes did not seek refuge in the hills, they were assigned specific occupations within Brahminical society and were treated as belonging to the Sudra or fourth *varna*. Each of these conquered tribal jatis was made endogamous ; but later on the custom of endogamy spread to every other jati, whether it was tribal in origin or had come into being through division of labour.

In any case, if caste had been due merely to differentiation of occupation among the same people, there need not have been so much eagerness to mark off completely one jati from another as exhibited in actual practice. It was because the race-question was also there, that the rules developed to such strange proportions. The universal hatred towards conquered and subjugated peoples added materially to the stiffness regulating social relations between occupational classes. The racial question was indeed a bitter one in ancient India.

The Working of the Organization.

The production of wealth in India was thus organized on the basis of hereditary guilds which were marked off from one another in

several ways. There was peace in India for a long time ; and her economic organization proved so effective that India became one of the richest countries in the ancient world.

But the system had its own inner weaknesses too. Some of them were envisaged by social thinkers and allowed for, while others were probably not thought of before and were destined to render the system weak with the progress of time. We shall describe these one by one. In order to be more explicit, we shall start with a concrete example.

There is a tribe known as the Juangs in the hills of Central Orissa. These Juangs formerly lived by hunting, collecting wild berries and roots and cultivating the hillsides sporadically with nothing better than a hoe. As the Hindus gradually entered these fastnesses, the Juangs were defeated and retired into narrower valleys and higher hills. But the Juangs were numerous and the hills were not sufficiently extensive. The means of gathering food which they knew were not sufficient to give them plenty within their restricted environment. So there was famine among the Juangs ; and they gradually submitted to their Hindu neighbours and sought new occupations by means of which they could maintain themselves among the conquering population. The Juangs near the town of Pal Lahara in Orissa have taken up basket-making as their chief occupation. They manufacture baskets and sell them to the people of the neighbouring villages, and with that money supplement the small amount of food their women gather from the surrounding jungles. Those round the town of Dhenkanal, to the south-west of Pal Lahara, have specialized in gathering fuel from the jungles and selling them to the Hindus. The Juangs, who formerly supplied all their economic needs themselves, were now reduced to being producers of a particular commodity among the Hindu population of which they were now counted as one caste. If it had not been modern times but ancient India, then society would have given the Juangs of Pal Lahara monopoly in the matter of producing basketry and those of Dhenkanal in selling fuel ; and thus sealed and made permanent an economic adjustment which the Juangs had arrived at by themselves under the pressure of circumstances.

The economic organization of India in ancient times was built up substantially in this way. There was more an enforcement and fixation of haphazard adjustments than a deliberate planning of occupations from central headquarters.

The advantages of hereditary guilds enjoying monopoly under the protection of the State were clearly recognised. So the custom of

endogamy among the castes was deliberately encouraged to preserve the above system intact. This is a very important point to remember ; for it is this element of deliberateness which, in fact, created the caste-system in its present shape in India ; and whose absence prevented it from developing in other lands even when most of the other historical conditions were in existence there.

Now, there is one thing which grows out of this condition if there is peace and prosperity in the land. Let us suppose there is one blacksmith in a round of two or three villages to serve the needs of all the villagers. In course of time a blacksmith is likely to have as many children as a peasant has. In any case, there is no reason why a blacksmith should have less children than his peasant neighbour. As time progresses and children grow, a village can accommodate many additional peasants but not as many blacksmiths ; for one blacksmith can serve many customers. Therefore, if there is peace in the country, and an equal growth of the different castes, then any economic adjustment arrived at in a particular generation is likely to be upset in the following ones. There will be more blacksmiths and carpenters in the village than the villagers might have need of.

Under the circumstances, two or three things are likely to happen. Our hypothetical blacksmiths will starve, while the peasant families will prosper. Some of the blacksmiths may eventually die and a balance might be restored in conformity with the needs of the remaining population. Or the extra blacksmiths may give up their hereditary occupation and adopt new areas with bands of extra-peasants to found new colonies and develop virgin lands. In ancient India, there was yet plenty of room for expansion, and every threatened maladjustment was tided over one way or the other. But there was still another way, which seems to have been followed in certain cases. In the time of the Buddha, we read of villages exclusively peopled by potters, carpenters or smiths (Banerji : *Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India*, p. 211). It thus appears that extra-hands from different castes sometimes gathered together and produced goods not only for the neighbouring population, but perhaps for distant parts of the Indian continent as well. Thus a sort of 'foreign trade' developed when there was too little of home consumption in the neighbouring villages, and perhaps little chance of founding new colonies.

The Other Danger.

The caste-system had thus one seed of disruption within itself, which became active when, due to an equal rise of population in different castes, the demand for different types of occupation did not grow at an equal rate. The other danger was due to an accentuation of differences between various jatis. It is a well-known fact that some jatis belonged to the Brahmin, some to the Kshatriya, some to the Vaishya and the rest to the Sudra varna. Among these, distinctions were drawn with regard to social privileges as well as in the matter of legal treatment. Perhaps Brahmins and Kshatriyas were favoured with extra grants of privileges because society then stood more in need of intellect and martial ability. But the leaders of Hindu Society, while placing a premium upon these forms of human activity, could not have failed to notice that there lay, in this very arrangement, seeds of future disruption. Privileges, all over the world, have a habit of growing by geometric progression. In course of time there was every likelihood of an accumulation of riches among the upper classes and of destitution in the lower. If Brahmins and rich men in the shape of Vaishyas were allowed to exploit Sudras without any check whatsoever, then there was every likelihood of the whole organization crumbling down one day through the discontent of the Sudras.

A deliberate attempt was therefore made to bring about some sort of correction of this state of affairs. Brahmins were taught that renunciation of earthly comforts was the noblest ideal for a man of intellect and Kshatriyas and Vaishyas were taught that the best thing a man of riches and of power could do was to employ his wealth in the service of the people, and not in the pursuit of personal gratifications. A Brahmin who was full of learning and poor was honoured more than one in more affluent circumstances. A rich man or a king who spent his wealth in building temples or wayside rest-houses or in helping poor men of learning, was extolled as one who was destined to gain heaven as a reward of his public activities. In this way, the inequalities of wealth and of opportunity were sought to be smoothed over and some allowance made for preventing social disruption through the accentuation of class-differences.

It must be noted, however, that although these attempts for correcting some of the rigours of the economic organization were made, they were made not through any legal apparatus, but by the

promise of happiness in after life and of fame in the present. That is, men were induced to surrender some of their advantages by the promise of reward and not by the fear of legal punishment. The people had no rights over men's income, the State too had none. Some may argue that the promise of fame is a better incentive to good action than the threat of punishment, for the former does not demoralise man as the latter does. But without entering into this question, we might summarily say, that in ancient India, we do discover a certain arrangement through which the evils of class distinction were subjected to correction through voluntary effort. We shall not even discuss how far these traditions and values were effective in practice, but shall rather pass on to later developments of the organization of caste.

Over-growth of Military Activity and its Effects.

India's economic organization worked satisfactorily for a very long time, and her arts and crafts gained considerable reputation in the outside world. India might then be said to have been industrialized to a fair extent. Indian merchants engaged in foreign trade, and as they had less to buy, and more to sell, India became extremely prosperous through her export trade. Gold accumulated in the coffers of merchants and of kings; and some of it found its way to temples and monasteries by way of public donations. The abundance of wealth and of luxuries in which the people rolled, soon attracted men from outside the frontiers of the land. The Sakas, the Hunas, Arabs, Afghans and Mughals invaded India by turns. At first they came principally for plunder, but later on, they settled down to found empires. These people from outside India were generally more hardy than the people of the Indo-Gangetic plains; but there was probably another factor which contributed materially to the defeat of the Indian plainsmen.

Through long eras of peace and prosperity, the inhabitants of India had developed fixed habits, and it was hard for, say, a peasant, suddenly to take up the soldier's profession. The military castes had been entrusted with the work of protection, and these too had become mentally lethargic and unadaptive. They had become proud and self-satisfied, and neglected to take note of improvements in the art of warfare which were taking place outside India. As a result, when the army of elephants and foot soldiers was confronted by the mobile

cavalry of Central Asia, who moreover practised new tactics, the Indian army fell an easy prey to its aggressors even when the latter were not very numerous. Thus the very perfection of the caste-system, with its division of labour on a hereditary basis, which had brought prosperity to the land in time of peace, was now responsible for India's defeat at the hands of her foreign invaders.

However that may be, we notice that even after the establishment of the Pathan and Mughal empires, the organization of caste continued to work more or less as before. The conquerors learned to profit by the prosperity of their subjects. But though India was, on the whole, defeated, yet the defeat was not taken completely lying down. Indian military castes had lost their adaptability, and they took a long time in changing their strategy and tactics. In the meantime the foreign conquerors pressed on, and Hindu chieftains only succeeded in staying their advance where Nature offered them certain advantages. But eventually the Indians did change their methods. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the Marathas evolved their own system of war, while the Sikhs in the north and Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultan in the south, adopted partly the more improved European methods of warfare.

In any case, during these centuries of wrangle for political power, a great value came to be attached to the military profession. So that the caste-system was subjected to a serious process of straining. In earlier ages, the priest and the king had been given special privileges ; but now kings and soldiers monopolised that position. Moreover when there was maladjustment in former times, people developed new trades or colonized new lands. But now a premium was placed upon the soldier's occupation, and the unemployed of all castes flocked to this particular profession. There was no progress in productive activities, but an overcrowding in unproductive employments.

There was yet another factor operating upon the caste system during this period ; and that was the progress of Islam in India. Islam is more democratic than Hinduism, and it does not tolerate the form of inequality among its converts which is associated with the caste system of the Hindus. And Islam was politically powerful. So this force too began to affect the caste-system adversely. Many people of the lower castes were converted to Islam, while serious disintegration in the traditions associated with caste started with the spread of Persian culture among the educated classes. Various sects, like the Sikhs and the Kabirpanthis, arose in India who incorporated some of the ideas of Islam, and took their stand on a new attitude of

brotherhood and equality which was, more or less, antithetical to the inequality associated with caste.

All this happened during the middle and towards the end of the Mohammedan rule in India. In order to protect Hinduism and its social organization from the disintegrating influence of Islam, the orthodox Hindu social leaders developed a defensive attitude. This attitude had a serious effect upon the caste system. On the one hand, it made the rules of marriage more rigid and its social legislation stiffer and more puritanic ; and, on the other, by this very stiffness of defensive attitude, it drove the lower castes more and more towards Islam, or those new forms of Hinduism, like Sikhism, neo-Vaishnavism and the like, which were more democratic in character, and thus nearer in spirit to Islam, which was spreading through its political influence.

Advent of Capitalism.

We can thus imagine how the caste organization of India suffered heavily from political turmoils. It was in this state of affairs that the political power in India passed on finally from the hands of Indians to Europeans.

When the British first came into power in India, they did not proceed immediately to disturb either her social or her industrial organization. They were more interested in gathering gold by trade and other means and sending their gains home. It is said that the wealth derived from India was substantially responsible for bringing about the Industrial Revolution of England. With the progress of British industries, British merchants who formerly sold Indian manufactures in Europe, now began to dump their own wares into the Indian market. Machine-made goods are naturally cheaper than hand-made ones ; and the inevitable result was that Indian manufactures were seriously endangered through British imports.

This was not all. There was not merely Free Trade in India, but something more than that. After the consolidation of power, the British Government in India employed its authority principally in directions which were detrimental to Indian interests and conducive to the interest of their own countrymen. The investment of British capital was made safe in India, the sale of British products was encouraged ; while India was turned into a producer of raw goods to feed British industries ; until through nearly two centuries of steady effort, the British government has succeeded in their ultimate object of making India almost completely subservient to British Capitalism.

Caste under Capitalism.

Let us proceed to see what effect the spread of Capitalism has had upon the social organization of India. We have seen that in the days of hereditary monopoly under the sanction of Society and of the State, the different jatis had developed the custom of endogamy. This had been made more stringent through racial considerations. So long as men got food by following hereditary occupation, the rules of endogamy endured. But under Capitalism, many craftsmen were thrown out of employment. They had also notions about the superiority and inferiority of particular occupations. And all those notions and old traditions now prevented them from taking up occupations freely when the hereditary ones proved insufficient.

In the town of Bolpur, for example, there is enough room even now for Bengali carpenters, blacksmiths and washermen. But Muchis, who formerly worked in leather, cannot take up these professions on account of social prejudices. They would not be allowed to wash clothes of the higher castes. These unemployed leather-workers therefore flock to agriculture, for that seems to be the only industry in which all castes can drift without any social objection. The price of farm-labour has gone down considerably. For the sake of profit, proprietors frequently change their farm-hands. So there is no longer any zest on the part of the farm-hands to get the best out of land. They work just enough to keep themselves going. When they feel the need of enjoyment, they do not work harder to make their life in comfort possible, but spend their little earnings in drink.

There has thus been a progressive decline in agriculture, due to the bankruptcy of ancient industrial occupations. But the middle classes have prospered in Bengal, because they joined government service or helped to sell foreign manufactures or acted as agents for exporting the raw produce of the land to foreign countries. English education has thrown its doors equally open to all castes, and whenever there was possibility, men from all castes, high or low, have flocked into the above professions and swelled the ranks of the middle classes.

The most interesting result of this decay of the working classes and prosperity of the professional ones has been in the field of social relations. The Muchi and the Jugi grew poor in Bolpur, and their wives found life very trying in their family surroundings. The professional and trading middle classes, on the other hand, had more

money. They had recently left their village homes to settle in towns, with the result that there was thus a natural growth of prostitution among the poor people. Jugis could no longer find women to marry, and so they married in lower castes, left their village-homes, settled in distant villages and passed off as Hadis or Muchis themselves. In this way the barriers which divided lower castes from one another have been breaking down through poverty.

On the other hand, among the middle classes too, men have drifted from all castes, high and low. They have been brought up under the same educational system, treated equally in the law-courts and mercantile offices, and have, consequently, developed a uniform culture. There has been a standardisation among the middle and upper classes due to economic prosperity and well-being ; while the breaking up of barriers among the working classes has been through progressive impoverishment. The effect has been the same in both cases, only the proximate causes have been different.

But the ultimate historical cause there has been but one behind both these phenomena. India was formerly organized on the basis of a confederation of hereditary arts and crafts. Self-sufficient units formed by such confederation were strewn widely over the land ; but the organization was subjected to severe strain through political exigencies, though the growth of militarism and of feudal estates did not completely overthrow the economic organization. What Feudalism failed to do, Capitalism has succeeded in achieving with the aid of its attendant political power. Capitalism rendered the industrial castes bankrupt, while it laid a premium upon the production of raw goods for export and of services which minister to the sale of those goods and the sale of manufactured goods from foreign lands. So the decay of the working castes and their reduction to one level through poverty, and the rise of the middle classes and their standardization through plenty are only two aspects of the same process of the overthrow of a hereditary gild organization through the power of capitalism.

The Future.

The process of social deterioration in India has not, however, been complete. The older social traditions regarding interdining and inter-marriage and the notions of purity or impurity of occupations, have not been wholly wiped off. They prevent free economic adjustments as



KHAN ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

Nandalal Bose

well as fusion of men of the same profession with each other. The Brahmo Samaj and similar reformatory movements have partially helped to bring about the required fusion among the middle and upper classes of Bengal. The Nationalist movement has helped the same process in an indirect way by lending public support to intermarriages and to inter-caste marriage Acts. But the lower castes, the working classes like the Muchis, Hadis or Doms, have been left in comparative neglect. They have not been educated to get over their old social prejudices ; they regard them with superstitious fear although they are now useless. But they too have been groping their way to social fusion through haphazard, blind and extremely painful methods of adjustment. The only movement which has been helping them partially is the Village Industries Movement of Mahatma Gandhi, which seeks to raise all manual work to a position of dignity and which brings courage and energy among the neglected working classes in rural India.

The present social situation is as has been outlined above. Capitalism has forced us into a social condition where the old traditions no longer suit us. If we do not want Capitalism and determine to restore the old order then we can afford to stand over the ruins of our ancient fort and defend our remaining traditions from further disruption. But if we wish to advance from our present colonial condition under Capitalism to goals further ahead, then we have to face facts and destroy the traditions which hold us back from such adaptations as alone will help us to reconstruct the structure of our society. We must help the people of India to adjust themselves to the changed conditions and save them from the slow grinding pain of social maladjustments.



DEAR SAD EYES !

DEAR sad eyes, what have you got
Deep in your heart, that wrought
The very image of sorrow in your look ?
Were you born so, that your sole thought
Should ever be matched with pain, or took
That sombre hue when youth had brought
Its load of misery with merry laughter,
Not knowing that misery lives long after
Youth itself, or mirth ? Dear sad eyes,
Whence that lingering shadow, softer
Than star-lit water, or clouds, or light that dies
On hill-tops at eventide ? Dear sad eyes,
Could I but learn where sadness lies !

Asok Maitra.

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION

Prem Chand Lal, Ph. D.

THE term 'Progressive Education' has become the watchword of modern educators today, and in almost every country there are movements and institutions of one kind or another trying to follow the principles of Progressive Education. Not all of them, however, are progressive in the real sense of the term. By merely having modern buildings, modern equipment, revised courses of study, extra-curricular activities and the like, schools cannot become progressive. On the other hand, schools with old buildings, or with very few buildings, poor equipment, or otherwise wanting in many of the appliances that most modern schools possess, may yet be progressive.

Almost every age has produced some great educator or pedagogue ; but perhaps never in the history of the human race, have there been so many pedagogues, pedagogic philosophers and men of science so anxiously devoted to the problem of education as today. Most of the philosophers and men of letters of the 18th and 19th centuries did not concern themselves very much with the problem of education. They were interested more in abstract philosophies and purely academic studies, and did not feel like coming down from the high pedestal of pure thinking to the education of a mere child. Today there is hardly any philosopher or thinker who does not concern himself in one way or another with this most important question. Education has, therefore, come to mean a good deal more than what it has meant heretofore. Not only educators, but parents, business men, politicians, officials of governments not directly connected with education, all have come to realise the value of education and are interesting themselves with its problems. During the present age, among the numerous philosophers and educators who have written on 'Progressive Education,' the name of Professor John Dewey is probably the most outstanding and his philosophy of education is taught and practised in nearly all the progressive schools of Europe and America. Although a philosopher, he tried to put his philosophy into practice by founding a school in Chicago. Professor Findlay of the University of Manchester has coupled John Dewey's name with that of Rabindranath Tagore who, he says, is equally great in the field of education in the East. He, too, has founded a school at Santiniketan which

has today developed into an International University known as Visva-Bharati.

Several factors are responsible for the movement of Progressive Education, but the one which is perhaps the most general and the most effective cause of this change in the philosophy and practice of education is the rapidly changing civilization of the present age. In no other age in history has civilization undergone, and is undergoing, so much change as today. To keep pace with this rapidly changing civilization is the task which progressive educators have to face, and the greatest problem has been that education has not been keeping pace with this change. This change is not confined to any one country, but is universal. People cannot any more think of their particular countries in isolation. They are more dependent upon each other than they ever were before, and are realizing that no country can afford to live politically, economically and culturally independent of other countries, for the well-being of one depends upon that of others.

Some of the most important factors responsible for this movement of Progressive Education all over the world may be listed as follows :—

1. Dissatisfaction with the traditional schools.
2. Advance made by science, philosophy and psychology.
3. Democratic ideas and ideals of the present age.

1. Dissatisfaction with the traditional schools:—From the beginning of the twentieth century, there has been a growing dissatisfaction practically all over the world with the existing traditional schools for the following reasons :—

(a) These traditional schools ignored the laws of genetic psychology. The teachers were given to consider that they were concerned mainly with the 'mind' of the pupil. Mind was considered to be distinct from the body. Mind and body were considered as two distinct entities, and education was merely the business of training the mind. The 'Progressive Education' insists upon considering the pupil as a whole. Bosanquet, the English philosopher, regards the young human being as a 'body-mind' which grows as a whole, and is to be educated as a whole. This, according to him, is, in a nutshell, the philosophy of the 'Activity School' and of all education which stresses the vital interpretation of physical, intellectual and moral activities and growth.

(b) In these traditional schools, the centre of gravity was

anything and everything except the child. He was not considered as an individual, much less as a personality. The Progressive Education, on the other hand, regards every pupil as a centre of physical and intellectual life ; he is regarded not only as an individual but as a personality, and the development of this personality is the main business of education.

(c) In the traditional schools, education was divorced from life and life-experience. School pursuits were quite remote from pursuits outside schools and from life in general.

(d) The curriculum was based on subject matter, each under a separate compartment with little or nothing to do with the pupil's interest. The pupils were merely passive recipients of what the teacher had to give them. If they could not do well in a subject it was their fault ; they were considered to be stupid, and that was an end to their education.

(e) There was rigid discipline brought to bear on the pupils, and no freedom of any kind given to them. Force and compulsion were the rule. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" was the motto.

(f) All pupils were expected to advance at the same rate from one point to another in their studies, regardless of individual differences in intelligence, taste and capacity. The bright, dull and mediocre, all being placed in the same rank and expected to make the same progress.

(g) The old schools developed in the pupils the spirit of "followers," and no chance was given to bring out the best in each individual. Initiative was suppressed. The pupils had only to receive and nothing to contribute. There was no room for independent thinking.

(h) Children were to be prepared for adult life ; child life and child interests being absolutely ignored.

(i) Too much stress was laid on examinations which required mere cramming and the learning of details which had little or nothing to do with the problems of life and life-situations the pupils had to face after they left the school.

(j) Education was too narrow to meet the demands of the rapidly changing civilization ; it was too liberal and classical, while the practical and scientific sides were, more or less, ignored.

2. Advance made by science, philosophy and psychology:

Science: The second most important factor in bringing about the movement was the progress science had made in all branches of

industry. Science, as it then was, was studied more as an academic subject than for its practical application. But today science has moved out of the laboratories and we find in everything that we have to deal with, the application of science. In education, therefore, a very important place has to be given to the practical sciences.

Philosophy : Modern educational philosophy has had a great influence on the Progressive Education Movement. Philosophy, like science, in order to be living, has to be made use of and lived practically. The old philosophies, too, did have their influence on the educational movements of their times ; hence the purely liberal and classical education. Modern philosophy is a philosophy of life, and life in a modern world. It is not individualistic, but for a group or society. Society cannot be sacrificed to the clamour of the individual, although in order to be of the greatest possible use to the society, the individual has to develop his own individual self, i.e. his personality.

Psychology : In the field of psychology also great changes have taken place. We cannot think of any phase of education without considering it in the light of modern psychology. The World Convention of the New Education Fellowship (a world-wide movement of progressive education) which met at Elsinore, Denmark, in 1929, discussed nothing but Psychology and the Curriculum ; which shows how important a place psychology has in the progressive education. The old traditional schools never concerned themselves with psychology as such. Today it is of supreme importance, and every teacher, in order to be successful, has to know at least its elements. Beginning from a study of the child to the making of the curriculum, with all the other subjects thrown in between, it is psychology which tells us what to do. Thousands of experiments are being carried on in order that more light may be thrown upon the subject, and all this in order that we may understand the child better and provide for all his various interests according to individual intelligence and capacity, not leaving out the so-called dull and stupid, but finding out in what ways their interests could be tapped so that they also may be useful citizens of this world.

The old conception of "faculty psychology" has been completely overthrown, and in its place the new conception of mental development of the individual based on the principle of growth has come. It has made the educator look at the child from quite a different standpoint, that the child is a growing being full of potentialities for development, and not a being with fixed, ready-made psychological cate-

gories. This psychology has given us the principle that education is a constant process of building on the basis of experience and of reconstruction in the light of new experience.

Further, due to this change in educational psychology, there has consequently come about a change in the philosophy of education. The old notion of preparing the child for adult life has been replaced by the theory that education is not only preparation for life, but that it is life itself. In other words, the activities of the school have to be closely connected with those of the society in which the child lives.

3. Democratic Ideas of the Present Age : These democratic ideas too have considerably influenced educational thought. Whether the educationists believed it or not, educational systems and schools in different countries in different ages have, to some extent at least, been the miniature copies of the governments of those countries. For instance, the school in Germany under the Prussian regime showed exactly what the government was like. The rigid discipline was nothing but a reflection of the militaristic government. There was no place for students' self-government ; they had no voice in the programme of the school. Today, the whole world is leaning more and more towards democracy, specially since the Great War. The present age is not an age for monarchies, much less autocratic monarchies. With these changes in the governments, there has come about a change in our educational ideals and practice. There were democracies in the 19th century also, but then the conception of democracy was somewhat different from what it is today. In most of the countries which were monarchical before the War, education, and specially secondary and higher education was open only to the privileged classes. It has now been thrown open to the masses as well, and the slogan of the present age is "Education for All."

In spite of this slogan, however, the vital problem of modern education, namely, the relation of Education to Social Order, still remains to be boldly faced. Even a casual examination of nearly all the "progressive schools" will reveal the fact that they are mainly serving the wealthy and the upper middle class communities. While it is very essential that the children of these communities be taught the right attitudes towards those who are not so fortunate as they in respect of wealth or social position, the children of the poorer classes have also to be taught self-respect, self-reliance and a sense of their own responsibility in the building up of a new social order. Doctrines of a new

social order are, however, not so easily taught as long as teachers of even the progressive schools are living in constant fear of their employers who in most cases belong to the capitalistic class. Teachers are living in constant fear of being dismissed on account of their socialistic views ; and nor is it altogether fair to judge and say that they should take a bold stand and teach such doctrines, when we think of their responsibilities to their families, specially during these days of world depression and unemployment. Professor George S. Counts of the Columbia University, one of the foremost progressive educators of today and one who has made a thorough study of the subject, says in one of his addresses, DARE THE SCHOOL BUILD A NEW SOCIAL ORDER ?—"Even a casual examination of the programme and philosophy of progressive schools, however, raises many doubts in the mind. To be sure, these schools have a number of large achievements to their credit. They have focussed attention squarely upon the child ; they have recognized the fundamental importance of the interest of the learner ; they have defended the thesis that activity lies at the root of all true education ; they have conceived learning in terms of life situations and growth of character ; they have championed the rights of the child as a free personality. Most of this is excellent, but in my judgment it is not enough. It constitutes too narrow a conception of the meaning of education ; it brings into the picture but one half of the landscape. . . .

"The weakness of Progressive Education thus lies in the fact that it has elaborated no theory of social welfare, unless it be that of anarchy or extreme individualism. . . ."

Taking everything into consideration, then, the whole question of Progressive Education depends solely and entirely upon the vision, intelligence, sympathy, skill and spirit of the supervising and teaching personnel. Indeed, a school may have the best of material equipment, a staff of experts and specialists, and even have the name carved in marble over its gates and be affiliated to one of the Progressive Educational Movements, and yet be a dead school. And a school suffering from the lack of any of these advantages, may yet be a progressive school. Why ? Because there is a really progressive captain in the pilot house and a really progressive crew on the deck.

FIFTY YEARS OF GROWTH

K. R. Kripalani

THERE lies before us, reposing for the while and awaiting our adulation on its fifty years of life and power, a marvellous monster, who, however, changes its shape so often that we have not yet known how to describe the character of the god-beast whom we are so glad and so proud to worship and obey. All that we are sure of, at present, if we trust our these commonplace eyes, is that it has a huge body, somewhat like that of a python, but ill-formed and disproportionate ; full-fed and forceful at one place, sagging and almost insensate at another ; here gaudy and glittering, there dull and dusty ; with three stripes running over its length, saffron, green and white. The saffron at points is almost fiery and reminds one of Blake's Tiger ; the green is so faint that it seems spurious, although it is quite genuine ; the white is rather dusty and colourless. The belly, of course, is all white but is almost entirely hidden from view, because it is on the belly the god-beast is lying.

We also know some of its characteristics. We know, for example, that although at present it is lying lazily and is merely turning from one side to the other, showing up its belly rather prominently, no doubt, to impress upon its devotees that it is alive, it is capable of great energy and even agility. We have seen it struggle and attack, when its scales that seem so soft move like sharp blades, cutting whatever rubs against it, and its hissing is like the rumbling of the earth before it quakes. Hissing, in fact, has so far been one of its most potent weapons. It hisses not only through the mouth but through every pore of its skin ; and, as the pores hiss, the scales glow as though they were made of flame, so that the uncanny effect of this conjunction on the beholder serves the purpose of a very powerful weapon. Although it has a few tiny teeth, it is not known whether it carries poison behind them. Its opponents assert that the teeth will develop, if they have not already developed, into real fangs ; its friends shout, Never ! Although there is no lack of prophets, the forecasts of the future are not very convincing.

The most significant thing about this strange beast is that it does not live out in the open and is not free to move about at whim. It is an organism within an organism, although there is great

controversy whether the two are organically related. It is entangled in the entrails of a mighty Leviathan. In fact, it has grown up within the belly of this Leviathan, although it is certainly not its child. It has been so growing for a good many years, and, much as the Leviathan has tried to crush it, it has not so far succeeded in even arresting its growth. It is so involved in the entrails of the mightier beast that, although the latter swears most honestly that it is gnawing into its entrails, it somehow cannot crush it without twisting its own delicate organs.

When this strange prodigy was first born, it was a most insignificant worm, but exceedingly gaudy ; and even then its hissing was out of all proportion to its size or energy. The Leviathan could then easily have crushed it but perhaps thought it too harmless ; indeed, may even have been tickled by it. It was so pompous, and moved with such slow majesty, and withal its touch was so caressing that it is not surprising that the other was amused. The Leviathan, moreover, had quite recently recovered from a most acute internal disorder : the blood corpuscles had suddenly mutinied and caused it many convulsions. The hard-won recovery had made it somewhat self-complacent and even indulgent. In any case, the worm was allowed to grow, and it grew at a most alarming speed. It went on fattening and hissing, but was otherwise quite sluggish and innocent, and, at times, even caressed and tickled the inside of the bigger beast within which it was living.

Then a little later, almost suddenly, its flabby skin began getting taut and rough, and, what was really ominous, it began to develop those spots of red that burn like fire, which we have already noticed. No one knows how they were developed ; in fact, no one knows how the worm itself was born. Even the mighty Leviathan does not know, although it insinuates that, while much of the body of the worm was built up of the refuse of its own food, an incalculable particle of one of the blood corpuscles that had mutinied, got mixed up with it. The devotees of this growing marvel most indignantly repudiate this insinuation, pointing out to the otherwise gentle and bloodless nature of their idol and asserting that the glowing points denote a subtler and more spiritual origin which the crude touch of the bigger beast is unable to feel. However that be, there is no doubt the two of them do not get on well. They have even fought at times, when the python, by swelling and rising to the throat of the Leviathan, almost prevented it from swallowing any food and so

nearly made it perish of starvation. The latter, in fact, asserts that the python is aiming at becoming itself the Leviathan. This fear is so deep-rooted in it that it is always feeling—and sometimes even pulling out—the teeth of the younger beast to find out whether it is developing fangs. It is also afraid the python might grow so much that it might just burst through its bearer and cut it open by sheer inside pressure.

The python's attitude, to tell the truth, has not been without ambiguity. At times it has frankly announced its will to displace the bigger beast ; and at times it has declared—too naively—that it is content to live within and merely regulate the digestion of the Leviathan. The latter, however, is adamant in its suspicion. No one seems to know what the end would be or how it would be achieved. The younger rival seems to be divided within itself: the mouth seems bent on nibbling, the tail on wriggling. No one seems to know. No one dares even to prophesy. For the moment we hear only a lazy hissing.

I must apologise for the above symbolism which, even to the writer himself, appears irreverent and grotesque. I will, therefore, try to make amends by saying something simple and may even succeed in saying something sensible.

The Congress, or better, the Nationalist Movement, in its infancy was an exceedingly innocent and harmless body, though it was always pompous and given to prattling borrowed platitudes. It was chiefly made up of a small, prosperous, newly forming class, nourished, both economically and intellectually, on the particular conditions created and maintained by British rule in India. This class claimed a share—very politely, of course, as behoved the gentlemen of that refined age—in the benefits that were seen to be going solely to the Britisher. But only a share, nothing more. Indeed, how could they claim more, since they distrusted their own traditions and their own masses, and believed profoundly in British genius ? Of the sincerity of their admiration for, and faith in, British character, there can be no doubt ; for there were and are real grounds for admiring the manly traditions of these "intruders from the antipodes"; and when we remember how awakening minds are intoxicated by first visions, we find it difficult to find fault with our early reformers. Moreover, it is our Indian tradition—and a truly beautiful tradition it is—to revere those from whom we learn ; so that, even apart from Gandhiji's religious dread of hatred, we are incapable of hating the British. For the

British, though they were sapping our vitality by other means, were at the same time teaching us whatever of good they had to teach. And we were grateful to them as we still are. But our gratitude today and our admiration of British genius, though still real—for we have not ceased to be Indian—does not hypnotise us as it did our elders, who quoted Burke with triumph to their masters and trusted that sooner or later the latter would translate the wisdom of their political philosopher into action. Meanwhile they studied Mill and sighed with Tennyson.

And so things would have gone on, had not this sluggish and decorous body, whose original attributes are still to be distinguished in our eminent Liberals, been before long transfused and transfigured by the introduction in it of an element that gave it for a while a flame-like character which we may still notice surviving in spots.

The old liberals had not discovered any vital source of energy in their class which could inspire them with fervour and could unite them in a single faith and idealism. Their pride was made up of feathers which they had picked up and gathered one by one. Borrowed feathers may help to decorate one, but they cannot help one to fly. Nor had they discovered any links with the people of the land they so ardently desired to serve ; and without such vital links they were impotent to transmit the energy they felt inspired with. It might be said of them that they quenched their thirst with bottled water imported from abroad and pitied the muddy river that flowed through their native soil. A long time was to elapse before we were to appreciate the infinite possibilities of the muddy waters at hand. In the meantime something startlingly romantic happened.

Even as Arjuna's arrow cut out for the dying warrior-sage a fountain of undefiled water, a stream of inspiration was pressed out of the buried glories of our past. The fountain was cut by the fiery shafts of Tilak, Vivekananda and Aurobindo, among others. They gave to Indian Nationalism its fiery basis in India's ancient cultural glory and its modern mission. The contact that was necessary for the leaders to establish with their land, they tried to reach not by feeling the actual conditions of their people so much as by realising the idea or the tradition of their country through the ages. It is always more beautiful and more inspiring to contemplate the Idea and be drunk with it than to face the actual facts and touch the running sores. Our imagination is always ready to help us to replace the uncomfortable actual by some sort of vision of our Radiant and

Luminous Mother, decked in all her ancient glory, and all the more beautiful because she gazes at us in suffering. And we fell at her rosy feet and cried in ecstasy, *Bande Mataram* ! And hearts beat and the blood tingled. The dull and the commonplace became so glowing and so beautiful that sacrifice became a joy and dying a better birth.

Such was the spirit that our first fiery patriots infused in the sluggish and pompous body of our early Nationalism. The chief characteristics of this patriotic idealism were that it was intense like a flame and it believed fervently in martyrdom.

“But where can we draw water,”

Said Pearse to Connolly,

“When all the wells are parched away ?

O plain as plain can be

There’s nothing but our own red blood

Can make a right Rose Tree.”

But this spirit, fiery and beautiful as it was, was fraught with grave dangers. The glory that it invoked and the passion that it aroused were so intensely Hindu that the Muslims were automatically left out. Not that they were deliberately excluded. But, at the very best, the Muslims were advised to *adopt* the Mother which the Hindus claimed as their own by ties infinitely more sacred. The orphanhood of the former was implicit in the psychological genesis of that patriotism. If pride was to be appealed to, if sentimentalism was to be worked up, the pride and the sentimentalism should have been of common character for both. If pride for both was not possible, then other motives should have been tapped. As it was, the cult of the *Bande Mataram* (not what the words by themselves signify—the worship of their land as the Motherland need not have frightened the Muslims—but the particular complex that was created by them) did inspire our youth, but only the Hindu youth. It left the Muslims cold. Indeed, how could the Muslims be supposed to accept the basis of their nationalism in worship of a tradition to which they either never belonged or which they had renounced long long ago ? The genesis of our earlier and lyrical and passionate Nationalism in Hindu pride, both innate and worked up, as well as its hidden dangers, have been admirably traced by Rabindranath in his *Gora* and his *Home and the World*. But the poet must share the fate of the truly wise: his warnings will be appreciated retrospectively and poetically. However that may be, it seems now not unlikely that had the influence of Tilak and Aurobindo

lasted in its original intensity, we might have had two Indias today—a Hindu-istan and a Pak-istan, both overlaying and undermining each other. The faith in violence they inspired and the violence of that faith would have been turned by Hindus and the Muslims against each other, specially as there was a third party to see to it that the opponents became mutually destructive. This is quite apart from the argument that revolutionary anarchism is more a way of self-justification than a method of achievement. It was therefore fortunate that the organised Indian Nationalism got as much out of the two fiery geniuses—Tilak and Aurobindo—as it could without recoiling on itself, and found its man of destiny in a different genius.

To maintain, however, that the basis of Tilak's and of Aurobindo's creed proved insufficient in its range of inspiration, and too explosive in its quality, is not to belittle their greatness as individuals. From out of quite narrow bases highest towers may rise. Moreover, political judgment is not the sole test of a man's greatness of vision or even of conduct. While it is true that in political vision they could not outgrow Mazzini (and we may see for ourselves what the world-mission of Mazzini's Radiant Mother has come to), their philosophy of life had its centre in that passionless poise of the soul, which the best of our Indians have always striven to achieve ; which the convulsions of a generation may shake but can never upturn. And if it be charged that even in their philosophy of life their inspiration must still be restricted mainly to their co-religionists, the charge recoils as an argument against the narrowness of all our religions that they prevent men from catching inspiration from such sublime geniuses for no better reason than that they spring from a different culture. In so far as a man like Swami Vivekananda or Sri Aurobindo does not exist for non-Hindus, it is a loss to them.

However that be, the fact remains that the conditions of our country being what they were, the beneficial effects of Tilak's and of Aurobindo's political personalities were soon exhausted, and might, if prolonged, have proved dangerous, if Gandhiji had not come on the scene, and, without in any way expressly repudiating the Bande Mataram frenzy and thereby creating a sensation which needs must have resulted in an anti-climax, had not quietly and almost without people perceiving the change, diverted the nation's attention from the Radiant and Luminous Mother, to the everyday visible tragedy of poverty, superstition and incompetence. Not that he loved his land any the less, its great past or the promise of its future,

but it was not a youthful adoration of the heroine of the world's only tale ; it was more the disenchanted but steadfast love of a sadder and a wiser age, the love of a man who, to adapt the Irish poet's exquisite lines, "loved the pilgrim soul in her, and loved the sorrows of her changing face." It seems our Poet felt the approach of the new worshipper when he wrote these lines of the Gitanjali—so sad, so tender, so deep that one dare not analyse them :—When I try to bow to thee, my obeisance cannot reach down to the depth where thy feet rest among the poorest, the lowliest and lost.

It was in the love of the "pilgrim soul" and in the service of "the lowliest and lost" that at last a genuinely common platform was raised for both Hindus and Moslems to stand upon and a common theme to work together. The platform, however, is still so littered with ancient rubbish, superstition here and sentimentalism there, that the worker is easily tripped over, or his attention is easily led astray. The broom that Gandhiji holds is very effective and neat, but perhaps too small to sweep the stage in less than a couple of centuries. Moreover, it has so many fancy feathers in it that the worker is often tempted to hug it as a fan, simply to caress his idealism with. It is difficult and hazardous to judge this wizard, but Gandhiji too seems to have exhausted his inspiration, except for those who are under the spell of his fascinating personality. He brought the Congress in vitalising contact with the masses and placed its programme on the firm though partial foundation of economic facts, and taught his followers how to be courageous without weapons ; not to speak of his educative and chastening influence on many other subsidiary aspects of our social and moral life. And he is the first great patriot who studied India's actual needs and was not hypnotised, as almost all early and ardent nationalists are, by India's special mission to give light to humanity—a beautiful illusion which flatters us and might even sustain us if we did not know that patriots in Montenegro also felt the same about the mission of their people. He taught us to love our people without idealising them, although for those who would be idealists, he recommends a sufficiently fatal course. He did all this, but that is as much as he could do, although no man under the circumstances could have done more.

But after him—and there is an after even to the best—who, or what programme, will carry the consequences of the mentality that he himself has partly created to their rightful fulfilment?—though he himself may refuse to acknowledge those consequences ! Will it be a

kind of Socialism ? And will the Hindu Socialists remain Hindu, and the Muslim Socialists Muslim ? Then will soon arise a Hindu Socialism and a Muslim Socialism, and each will call itself National Socialism. Or shall we break, by stepping over, our charmed circles ? And prove that truth is not spell-bound in names ? And shall we gain what Russia has gained and preserve what Russia could not preserve ?



REINCARNATE

My body will sleep within the womb
Of these green hills till the end of time !
And the winds will blow as they blew of old,
The stars will scatter their ancient gold
Over my cold and silent tomb.
But forth from the suns of unknown years,
From the dawns that break on an alien clime,
A dream that was mine will always burn
On the blossoming earth !
O Life, if I return
And capture again in my new birth
Your sterile joys and fears,
I know I shall roam on these windswept hills,
Full of the spirit that Death distils
From the once rich grain of Life. Ye shall grow,
Brave trees !
Strong winds, ye shall blow
Till my soul comes back
To travel again its earthly track.
A voice I knew will follow each breeze,
The glow-worm will seek as of yore its mate,
And the heart of these hills still be desolate ;
These bamboo groves will sing again
Of Life's barren hopes, unreason, and pain.
And silence will steal up the valleys of night,
And the gods will smile from their thrones of light !

E. H. d'Alvis.

PERSONAL LIFE¹

Count Hermann Keyserling

MORE deeply than so many definite modern philosophies, elementary grammar understands human life and its meaning ; for it is quite self-evident that of all things which can be comprehended by language, the most important is the subject. It is not true that any and every "thing" is higher than the personal. Probably the latter on its part belongs to higher connections ; these, however, are not of the nature of "things," but are over-personal ; they are not of an objective, but of a trans-subjective nature. Personality can incorporate real over-personality : here lies the ground of existence of all religious order and spiritual hierarchy, proved by experience. Where, on the other hand, personality incorporates not the over-personal but the factual, or when the emphasis is not placed upon it—not to speak of the extreme case where it is altogether lacking—there we have dehumanization.

Now the capacity for assuming an objective attitude, on the other hand, is one of the distinctive features of the human animal, and it is to the products and creations of this attitude that man owes his present position of power in the domain of Nature. How does this fact fit in with the view set forth above ? It fits in this way that the objective element represents the apparatus which the human animal requires for the struggle for life, as the spider requires the web, but that the supra-animal in man rises and falls with the rise and fall of objectivity.

All biological progress of the human race consists, no doubt, chiefly in the higher evolution of this. "Lord of Creation" is not the naked man ; we may say, not the man whom the mother animal places in the world, but the armed man : the naked man, on the contrary,

1. This is an English translation by Dr. S. K. Maitra, Professor, Benares Hindu University, from the original German of the Introduction to "The Book of Personal Life." This Introduction is being published here for the first time. "Problems of Personal Life," the original of which is in French and of which an English translation was published in 1934 by Jonathan Cape, London, is a different book from the book in question. "The Book of Personal Life" is a book born out of profound suffering, and its most important chapters bear the titles, "Suffering," "Loneliness," "Freedom," "Life in Art," and "Fulfilment." If possible, it will be published in German in 1936.—The Editor.

is found, as compared with all other beings, in the most unstable equilibrium with the universe. His original natural organism possesses neither the strength of the lion nor the speed of the deer ; neither the sharp vision of the hawk nor the chemical equipment of the poisonous snake or the Brazilian toad ; neither the physical endowment of the electric eel nor that of the antennae-bearing silk moth. His body is, as compared with that of the deep sea animals, chameleons, or coloured fish, extremely plain. His direct power of recuperation is very small : without the help of the healing art, the human race would have perished in the earliest stages. Man cannot, like the white ants, by the direct transformation of his organism, breed kings, warriors and workers. Even his best developed senses are dull, his instincts are narrow and uncertain : the gift of prophecy so essentially necessary for him—for, in order to live, he must consciously think out beforehand—is much poorer in him than it is in any tree-frog, bird of passage or dog. Only one thing man has from the beginning, judged as an animal, as contrasted with other animals, namely, intellect. Only this, in its highest developed form, to some extent, ranks equally with other means of self-preservation. Thus the scientific-technical age has first begun to fulfil the promise which the World-Creator, according to the primordial myth of the Land of the Two Rivers, made to man in Paradise, namely, that he will become the lord of creation. "Begun," I say, for even today, viewed as a whole, at least the microbes are mightier than he. It is no argument against this to mention here their wholesale destruction, for the same thing happens also among men, and among these there is far less certain, and not even approximately equal, compensation. Lastly, it may even happen that the intellect itself, thanks to its lack of sense for the organic connection of the whole, in the end will dig the grave of the human animal. This much is true today : the scientifically and technically educated man is today exactly as much a leading fossil as once the Saurians and Ammonites were. We live today "in the geological age of man."

That does not seem much if one considers, on the other hand, how incomparably awful is the devastation this animal perpetrates on the rest of creation. And the triumph of the human animal appears finally of questionable value when we learn that from another side he signifies to some extent the endangering of all that in man is not animal, a peril greater than any which the history of man has hitherto shown. Compared with the Americanized whites, the wildest primitive man seems not animal but thoroughly human. The latter does not live

upon material facts and their biologically most appropriate mastery : he lives directly with the help of mental and spiritual suppositions and connections. And however inexact most of his ideas may be in the scientific sense, they give to real subjective relations to the world a name appropriate to the stage of consciousness reached. All primitive people live by drawing upon their subject, that is, upon their mental-spiritual element ; it does not matter at all whether they possess a well-differentiated ego-consciousness. Compared with these, the Americanized white man seems at most superior only in point of objective connections, and that means that in him the apparatus for objective display over-shadows the consciousness of his spiritualized human soul. Hence that "animal ideal"² which I have depicted in my book on North America as the fundamental ideal of its present typical native. Hence that soul-degeneration whose highest expression, at the time when I write this, is Soviet Russia. Henri Bergson has now depicted man and the higher insect—the white ant, ant and bee—as the two highest points of the animal creation so far, which, consequently, would move in divergent directions, graphically described, in the form of a branching of the originally probably single *élan vital*. That may be ; though, since all living creatures are a unique wonder, no scientific hypothesis can claim a higher certainty than a nursery tale. Let us now accept for a moment Bergson's hypothesis ; we shall then be justified in saying further that man enjoys an amount of freedom of choice and decision which, as many would probably say to-day, is in excess of what he can digest. For, undoubtedly, he has during the last century diverted the course of natural evolution in the direction of the insect ideal. There is no doubt that technicization and industrialization lead to a convergence of man and the white ant. In machinism the chitin armour of the insect experiences a revival ; in all pre-determining organization its perfect reflection, in collectivism its highest social form, in which the individual is nothing and society everything. For in man also a living centre, which would have its place in the whole as such, can never replace the personal subject ; so the joint effect of compelling suggestion and loss of initiative gives a very similar picture. This picture, however, is not admirable but terrible, for perfect mass-organization is only possible for man, if everything is completely abstracted from the

² Cf. the chapter, "The animal ideal" in the author's *America Set Free* (New York Harper Brothers ; London : Jonathan Cape).

subjective and exclusively determined by reference to the object, if thus man not only becomes a part of a machine but feels and judges himself and his fellow creatures also as such. From the point of view of man the position of the white ant is also terrible. One should, however, consider the following sentences of Maeterlinck: "The civilization of the white ants, the earliest on earth, is the most remarkable, complex and intelligent and in a certain sense, the most logical, and for the mastery of life's difficulties, the most useful, that has ever arisen on our planet. In many respects it is, although cruel, dark and somewhat repulsive, superior to the civilization of the bees, ants and even men. In white-ant-heaps the gods of communism become insatiable Molochs. The more they receive, the more they demand. And they insist upon getting their demands satisfied until the individual is destroyed and his misery becomes complete. This frightful tyranny is without analogy among men, for whereas among us it benefits at least some, in white-ant society it gives no one any advantage. The discipline is more relentless than that of the Carmelites and Trappists; and the voluntary subjection to rules and regulations, of which one does not know the author, has no equal in human society. A new form of Fate, perhaps the most cruel of all, that "social form" to which we are drifting, is among the white ants associated with the forms of Fate to which we are already subject and which seem to us quite sufficient. There no rest is to be found except in the sleep of all; illness is not excused, weaknesses pronounce their own death sentence. Communism is pushed to the limits of cannibalism and coprophagy. . . . Compulsion and misery of all to the advantage and happiness of none—all this can continue, renew and increase a kind of universal despair, as long as the world lasts. These insects-states, which arose before us men, can almost be regarded as caricatures of ourselves or an imitation of that earthly paradise which most civilized people strive to attain. . . ." Perfect organization is only possible among men through complete subjugation of the subject by the thing, for the subject stands or falls with the power of exercising its will, which fact rules out all identification of the human ideal with the mechanical.

What enables us, however, with certainty to maintain that the state of the white ants really signifies the fulfilment of the original white-ant-ideal and not rather one made rigid owing to degeneration? P. D. Ouspensky³ defends energetically the latter standpoint, and

³ Cf. his *New Model of the Universe: principles of the Psychological Method* in

taking into account the gigantic intelligence of the white ants, this standpoint is hardly less probable than the Bergsonian. Perhaps even in white-antism, as in the extreme form of Americanism, original free initiative has been hardened into mechanical perfection. . . . Be that as it may, man is in no way a white ant, and man can only become what he is. Consequently, approximation to white-ant perfection causes in man no loss of value but organic degeneration in the elementary physiological sense. The white-ant race has acquired, thanks to its highest possible sacrifices, immortality on earth: Americanism devitalizes. It causes in the long run physical sterility and threatens consequently the naked existence of the human animal. The over-worked labourer among men falls in line with the sexless bee-worker ; and among men Nature has not provided any types whose physiology made it impossible for them to accept the labourer-ideal. Here lies probably the deepest ground for the present dangerous state of the European man. In china Confucianism has taken care that the spiritual element is in no way stifled by industry ; the semi-Asiatic Russia also, which consciously accepts a much worse insectism than North America, preserves its vitality by virtue of its religious gift, its want of a sense of order and its mental backwardness.

Under these circumstances, nothing is more easily intelligible than that everywhere the desire for a change of direction of the evolution willed and determined by the intellect is very evident. Only I think that the essential point of the problem has hardly yet been grasped. Scientific progress and technicization constitute Fate ; their arrest comes hardly in question ; rather, even the non-Europeans are to-day warmly accepting them. They are by themselves not at all things to be deplored, as it is mainly the armed and not the naked man who finds himself in biological equilibrium in the natural order which is characteristic of every other animal. Only their excess is inimical to life, and yet man possesses sufficient freedom of choice, capacity for knowledge and initiative to be able to prevent possible fate. On the contrary, this much is true : the most powerful counter-movements hitherto against intellectualism, in which in Europe is to be seen the root-cause and the original mischief of Americanism and Bolshevism, fail in their object from the very beginning. Greater sense for common life and common weal which statecraft encourages

and cultivates, can only increase the convergence with the insect. In the first place, feelings cannot be commanded or artificially kindled except in the sense of short-lived suggestion phenomena—and every common life which is not inwardly joined together by the soul is a compulsory organization and consequently opposed to the ideal of the free man. Secondly, perfect social organization among men can be established and preserved only in, and with the help of, the framework of objective institutions born of the intellect, so that the emphasis on common life leads to insectism. Thirdly, in the case of man it is essentially absurd to try to train him in such a way as to make him challenge his own dearest possessions, understanding and reason. Such absurdity takes away practically the value of even originally right intentions. Thus it is always to be welcomed if the human animal who runs the risk of becoming an insect, reflects on his warm-blooded character. Yet when he gives up that which has made the human animal lord over the rest of warm-blooded creatures, then the best that we can say is that he will be conquered by the despised insect. According to my conviction, there is only *one* method by which the degeneration of man can be prevented and by which his higher development can be guided. It is as follows : The objectification of the external side of human life which is not merely Fate but is also to be welcomed, inasmuch as man can attain through the intellect alone a place in the world-whole of equal rank with that of the animal, must be compensated by the deepening and heightening of personality ; the externalization must be balanced by suitable internalization, “the public appearance” by suitable “intimization.” And that means that in the being of man, mind and soul must rule, in order that it may be in the right form. *Mind and soul must be more powerful than they have been hitherto.* Then alone, but then at all events, can the biological higher evolution of the human animal lead to the ascent of man in the higher sense. I say advisedly, “lead”, for it can truly lead, inasmuch as it is the function of understanding—the human equivalent of the surer animal instinct—which is capable of introducing the required change of direction of evolution.

The question of Fate for the human race at this critical point of its evolution is whether it succeeds in referring back the so vastly extended world of the highest possible power to the spirit, and conversely, to project into the outer world the deepest essence of mind and soul. Compared with this, all other questions seem irrelevant. Hence the title of the work before us. Hence all its separate chapters,

as well as the points of its questions. In the preface to *Menschen als Sinnbilder*⁴ I wrote in 1925 :—"If I am to condense in one sentence wherein in my view my doctrine differs from that of other modern philosophers, it will be as follows: it proceeds from the living soul, as distinguished from the abstract man ; all questions it asks move round this. The "abstract man" was the discovery of the eighteenth century. It had, as a working hypothesis, its advantages as every theory has, for it is not possible to think absolutely falsely. The abstract man denotes, mathematically expressed, the integral of the human intellectual side. This is essentially impersonal ; for it there is only the universal and nothing particular. And so far as all life and thought has been in the intellect and from the intellect, the assumption that the intellect is the final reality has been upheld ; for this theoretical and practical achievements of the age of progress are the sole proof. On the other hand, however, the results of the last decade show that so far as the intellectual man is concerned there is no further progress, that whoever today appears to be progressing in the sense of the eighteenth or nineteenth century is really deteriorating, that further progress along the old path leads straight to ruin. Like every other historical stage the evolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth century was also one-sided. The moral and spiritual side of man remained outside the process of progress. And after this was made obvious by the *experimentum crucis* of world-war and world-revolution, it was known universally as the problem of the age to lay emphasis again upon the soul. Unfortunately, however, the problem was first understood in the sense of decline, without considering the truth of the singleness of the life process. The achievements of the last two centuries were ignored. On the contrary, I try to show that the correct view of the problem of the age is a purely progressive one ; it is not at all, much as we may wish to go backwards and forwards, to ignore the abstract man with his powers, but to relate him back to the totality of the living man. This, however, means that the question is to realize anew the truth of the soul as a living organism on a higher plane of knowledge, to restore the better knowledge of reality of the Middle Ages—for this was more conscious of reality than the modern age—and place it on the advanced stages of the understanding."

4. *Symbolical Figures*, containing an autobiography of Count Keyserling and essays on Schopenhauer, Spengler, Kant, and above all, the meaning of the personality of Jesus. Besides the German original there exists a French translation, *Figures Symboliques*, Paris, Librairie Stock.

What I wrote then about my work this book continues with pointed reference to personality. For, according to my view, after the evolution during the last ten years has proceeded further in the direction feared by me than I expected at that time, nothing but the greatest emphasis upon the inner side, upon the personal and intimate, can prevent dreadful dehumanization. Far more appropriate, therefore, to the beginning of our era appear the words of Christ : "What avails it to gain a kingdom if you lose your soul ?"

What one can learn from the *Book of Personal Life* itself on the subject, I need not repeat here. Yet I would like to say something in detail about the problem of the human animal, because there will be no further occasion for it later, and in conclusion, to work out clearly a knowledge of the fundamentals without reference to any particulars, upon the clear grasp of which, in my opinion, the deeper understanding of all particulars depends. Man is not only no insect, for which reason no insectification can produce higher evolution, but the human animal as such has lacked hitherto, thanks to science and technique, most of the organic apparatus of the positive utilization of the advantages acquired. The best thing perhaps in Henri Bergson's *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, a work of old age, is the successful proof that man by nature is equipped only for narrow social existence and small communal life ; hence most of the political failures which we come across more and more, as the historically determined connections become wider and wider. The same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of all regions. To the modern speed in all possible motion and communication there does not correspond any inherited disposition. Even today the pedestrian *observes* more of his surroundings ; he *understands* most of the world-process today who has no more facts and information to work with than Alexander the Great had. Of all the Italians who have up to now visited France, Julius Caesar has seen and understood most. To this view there corresponds the counterpicture which we meet with in increasingly abundant and frightful form. Such dull men as the record fliers are, for whose senses and understanding there is no perceptible difference between Australia and Europe, the world has probably never seen. On the other hand, however, they must probably remain dull or become so in order to preserve the life which they lead, for organically man is not built for it. Whoever goes in one day from Europe to Australia is of all beings the most to be compared with the flea, and no flea would jump simply and surely if it had to work out inner experiences during the jump. Thus the

modern technical possibilities favour, nay demand, insectification precisely in the sense of impoverishment. What constitutes the uniqueness of man among all the creatures known to us is, as Max Scheler happily puts it, his "world-openness." How should one, however, remain world-open, if he notices only that which he can see at a speed of five hundred kilometres per hour and when his normal contact with the non-ego is effected through the mineral apparatus and the impersonal voice of the radio? And if the senses and the soul are addressed in exactly the same way? Who has to live in this manner, without being able to live as man, cannot do otherwise than shut himself up like an insect in a shell from all impressions which are not necessary for his immediate objects. The flying man is, in the first place, not yet comparable to the bird; above all, the rigidity of the technical material produces a stiffness in his mind and the closed cell favours the development of the soul of a beetle. As with the velocity of his own motion, so it is with everything belonging to this. Externally good news-service dulls the attention; the habit of mechanically receiving every hour previously digested knowledge weakens one's own thinking; the passive attitude which the cinema and the radio demand and encourage, cripples the power of concentration; the all too readily accepted suggestion kills one's own initiative. And in the same sense men lose personality continually in modern technical life. Every feudal lord who lived his own span of life like an autocrat was an outstanding personality. Today what separates one man from another is "more or less efficiency"; personality plays an ever-diminishing role. The current modern organization based on the principle of efficiency signifies no emphasis upon personality. Personality is an Absolute; its whole value lies in its being. To be efficient, to lead, to follow, are, however, relational concepts which do not refer to being. The principle of efficiency must, however it may be handled, lead to further and further specialization: the prototype of the specialist, however, is the insect. In this description and enumeration I have purposely caricatured, for, of all symbols, the caricature, when it succeeds, represents best the essential in the most vivid and illuminating form. Thus I may, without further amplification, put forward the following thesis: The most important problem for life in the matter of progress is not the highest possible growth of the power of man over the external world, but another, namely, *how the present non-adaptability of mind and soul to the external possibility which is changing all external advantage into disadvantage, can be turned into adaptability.*

Now man has undoubtedly the centre of his being in the mind and the basis of experience in the soul ; out of this one fact follows with absolute necessity that one has to start from mind and soul and not from anything else, if out of the lack of equilibrium of this age of transition a new and higher equilibrium is to arise. From the same fact it follows also that the desired further development of the human animal must be started : there is no visible limit to mental and spiritual development, as well as to the deepening of personality. If, however, it can be started, then the desired development also—on account of the natural law that the unconscious transforms clear ideas from itself into reality—follows of itself. No doubt at the cost of some former capacities, so far as the power of reading and writing weakens as a rule the memory, but yet on the whole with absolute net gain. The present inadequacy of the advanced man is thus, as such, in no way Fate, and still less need it become worse and worse ; a perfection of a higher grade, such as is allotted to every human type, is clearly possible. It can, however, only be aimed at, if the emphasis is laid directly, and without any intermediate process, upon personal life. All "objectivity" must be eschewed from the very beginning and completely. All externality must be related back to the personal-inner ; from the standpoint of the intimate must the collective be viewed and treated—it is only when this is done (which can only follow from the personal and independent insight of the individual), that the path to salvation can be followed.

With this I reach the fundamental truth which in this introduction I would like to set forth, divested of all details. Here I will employ two current concepts for once in a sense different from the usual one ; yet what I mean would appear so clearly from the context that I can spare myself the task of justifying it. The individualist in his extreme form tries to solve all problems from beginning to end out of the ego ; this is true psychologically not only of the superficial materialistic egoist who seeks to solve the world riddle in terms of his own well-being, but also of the deep spiritualist to whom all is Spirit or Self or God ; in all these cases the personal uniqueness is the living centre of reference. The collectivist in his extreme form believes it possible to handle and understand any and everything, from beginning to end, from the side of the many-sided whole. And even this is true psychologically not only of superficial representatives of the type, the Marxists or ant-worshippers, the believers in a possible, all-satisfying State or in a humanity in which personality is submerged,

but also of really deep universalists who understand everything personal as the symbol of cosmic becoming, as this is seen in the case of most of the religious world-views, or—here I have specially in mind ancient China—view all events, personal, subpersonal and overpersonal, on the plane of the cosmic process. For psychologically, the question in all these cases is of equal orientation in an overpersonal whole. The philosophies of the individualists and collectivists are both untrue to facts and must be rejected by higher knowledge. All knowledge arises from experience, understood in the sense of immediate feeling ; all understanding presupposes unbiassed resignation of the whole man. It will not do, according to the thinker's prejudice, to unite or separate as far as possible what is revealed to consciousness in a qualitatively determinate way. Consequently, all monisms, all dualisms and pluralisms which do violence to the experienced reality are to be unceremoniously rejected. That "radical realism," to which in my opinion the future belongs, and which the present book has for its object to establish in all directions, demands the recognition of the "integral revelation," that is, the differentiated total reality, so far as it affects the whole man, in the actually subsisting relations of all parts to one another ; looked at no doubt from the point of view of man, for this personal equation is the living presupposition of our whole concept of knowledge. If one now considers carefully with the impartiality that is here needed, the essence of man in its relation to the world-whole, then there will be discovered, as the primordial phenomenon, man's irreducible, original multi-layered character. Man is really the microcosm, as the Renaissance viewed him ; all elements of the world known to us, all forces and relations working in him, live in him. And that in the manner in which these actually affect consciousness, not in the form of brain-wits or reflection-elaborates, as the mystics take them to be, who regard the mind-eliminate as truer than the phenomena of immediate experience. This whole complex must next be recognized as belonging to the essence of man. At the present stage of consciousness and knowledge, it will not do any more to ignore or devalue one part or another, or speaking more generally, to fondly imagine that the problem of life can be solved and mastered by prejudice and untruthfulness. Even the man with the narrowest views aims at realizing his personal fulfilment. There is actually no other working general ideal ; fulfilment, however, is only possible if man knows any and everything in itself in its right place and then forms his personal

life out of the totality of the given. What I mean here has been described, so far as theodicy, cosmogony and general anthropology are concerned, in my chief work, *South American Meditations*, in a way which is final for her. The fundamental views of the "Meditations" now require for the problem of personal life the following fundamental starting-point—and this I would like to put in this introduction briefly in the form of a thesis, so that the reader may possess the right clue to the understanding of the later special views. The most important factor for every man in all affairs of life is his profoundly personal loneliness, his personal spiritual Self. Exclusively from this standpoint is every problem of life to be approached and solved. Yet man is not merely constituted by the germ of his being. There is something essentially impersonal directly belonging to him. This he must now know in its impersonality and yet reckon himself personally as impersonal. Thus, for example, the social problem, although the individual is never the ultimate factor in society, is to be approached and solved only from the side of the individual—only in a way altogether different from that followed hitherto: correct personal approach in no way leads to false individualism. The different reflections of this book now deal exclusively from the standpoint of the personal self with the most important of the various grades and relations which indissolubly blend together and form part of man's being, the goal being the fulfilment of life. The chapters, entitled "Health," "Of the lower state of the life-struggle," "Family," and "Society," determine the most important element in the experienceable impersonality which belongs essentially to the nature of every man. As the book proceeds, it places itself more and more upon the standpoint of the personal and the spiritual. More and more the problem of life in its totality shows itself as the problem of art. At the same time, however, the book becomes more and more German. Born of the experience of German need, German struggle and German possibility, it employs specifically German problems not merely as materials for expression—many of the reflections are written only for the Germans and would only have a creative sense for the Germans, nay, will only be fully intelligible to them. The present book I could only write as a German in Germany in the year of the great crisis and for the Germans. But precisely such space- and time-conditions belong to the essence of the personal which is only in this way fulfilled, that it unceasingly joins itself to the given cosmic situation and brings this in its personal uniqueness fully into expression.

IN the springtime of wistful hours
 they came into my garden path,
 some with timid steps and shy hesitation
 picking up fallen petals among wayside shadows,
and some whose loud foot-prints spoke of the trodden grasses
 bruised under a casual unconcern,
 who in youth's arrogance tore away flowers
 leaving a thrill of pain in the pillaged branches.

The boisterous season is over.

 The bees have deserted the desolate lane,
 and the laughter and hum of the flower-gathering
 dies away into the dimness of a tired remembrance.
I wait now alone, my basket filled with reticent fruits,
 like the night that has gathered its stars
 for the far-away morning of an unrevealed sun.

Rabindranath Tagore.

*Translated by the poet from the original Bengali
(Bithika—September, 1935).*

You ask me, mother, where I most wish to go.

It is there from where I first came to you.

But I never can remember the place.

My father smiles at my trouble and says,

“It is beyond the clouds in the land of the evening star.”

But I hear from you, it is deep in the bosom of the earth,

from where the flowers come away seeking the sun.

“That land lies unseen,” my auntie says, “in the bottom of the sea,

hiding all the precious gems in its store.”

My brother pulls my hair and says,

“How can you find it, you stupid one,

for it is mingled in the air.”

It must be everywhere, it seems to me

when I listen to you all.

Only my schoolmaster shakes his head and says,—

“It is nowhere.”

Rabindranath Tagore.

Translated by the poet from the original Bengali

(Shishu Bholanath—1922).

THE GANDHARA GRAMA

Hemendralal Roy.¹

My excuse for the incomplete character of the present article—more appropriately, a series of comments—is that it is not intended to be read as an article. It is merely an humble reply to some statements made by Mr. A. H. Fox Strangways in an article on “The Gandhara Grama”, in JRAS of Dec. 1935. An article coming from the pen of an eminent critic like Mr. Fox Strangways is always worthy of close consideration. It is with some hesitation, therefore, that I offer the following comments. I hope to make a more detailed examination of the subject at a later date.²

Mr. Fox Strangways writes: “Perhaps one should begin by explaining why a mere scale—a thing that has no music in it—is important. All scales are not. India invents dozens every year, which disappear; either they were not worth while, or they were found to be an ingenious form of something else that is useful. But the three gramas (gamuts), the sa-grama, ma-grama, and ga-grama, have an immense prestige. It has always been felt that somehow they are the epitome of Indian melody.”

A mere scale that has no music in it is not so important as the ascent and descent of the notes up and down the scale (aroha and avaroha). These notes arranged in order of pitch become the scale (mela or thata) of a song or of a raga. The point has been discussed by me in my article in the Aug.-Oct. 1935 issue of this Quarterly. No scale is intrinsically superior or inferior to any other scale, but scales have varying degrees of importance with regard to the type of notes (suddha or vikṛta) contained or to the classification of the ragas. In the latter case it may be briefly stated that the derivative scales get less prominence than the parent scales. The present system of classification of ragas according to scales is defective leaving room for improvement. It is not true that “India invents dozens (of scales) every year which disappear.” I do not know of any scale being invented and then forgotten in the twentieth century.

1. The writer is a musician of talent, trained in the Lucknow School of Classical Music (Sangit Visarad), and is the Director of the Department of Music at Santiniketan.—Ed.

2. In a work on which the present writer is engaged—‘The Nature, Origin and Development of Hindusthani Music—to be published shortly.—Ed.

The three gramas have little prestige among musicians except in their traditional aspect. They serve no useful practical purpose. As a musician I may say, when we discuss ragas (the basic element in Hindusthani music), we hardly, if ever, bring in the gramas. Most of the musicians have the haziest of ideas about the gramas. Their placing of *sa* on its first instead of the fourth sruti in the professional terminology may be cited as an illustration.

Then Mr. Fox Strangways says: "A grama is a gamut, not a scale: it is a succession of notes, at specified distances, which may be started anywhere, whereas a scale has a definite starting point. The interval is the unit, not the note, and that is strange to us, who think in notes, not in intervals (*svara*)."

Gamut is perhaps used here in the sense of compass, for it is a term for scale too. A grama, to the best of my knowledge, was a scale. It was not a succession of notes which may be started anywhere. It was a scale in which the notes were at first *suddha* or pure. The *murchanas* were the subsidiary scale to which the *jatis* were referred (See *Sangit Ratnakara*—Anandasrama Edition, p. 45).

The interval is not the only unit in Indian music. Man was first conscious of the notes and then began to think of the intervals (possibly with the help of instruments). The next thing he did was to think in both these terms. *Svara* is a note and also an interval. The term tone is used in European music in a parallel sense. Also interval was a spatial term in ancient times and meant distance. The Sanskrit texts, as far as I am aware, agree with the view.

Then Mr. Fox Strangways tries to find out the notes of the *sa*- and *ma*-gramas with the help of ratios of pitch-numbers (and ratios converted to cents). Such a procedure would have been immensely helpful had we got any authority either from Bharata or Sarngadeva for making exact mathematical calculations on the basis of srutis. It is evident from the texts, though Bharata or Sarngadeva never say it in so many words, that the srutis were equal. This statement interpreted in strict mathematical terms means that the octave was divided into 22 equal intervals, the interval between any two notes having the ratio $1 : \sqrt[22]{2}$. But there is no evidence to show that these writers had exact mathematics in view when they wrote this. This equality could not be demonstrated either with the voice or with instruments and so was useless for giving definite pitch-number to notes. They were at best very rough calculations which will be apparent if we look at the matter a little more closely. Bharata says, "In the

madhyama grama pancama should be lowered by one sruti. The amount of difference in flattening or sharpening caused by lowering or raising the pancama by one sruti is the measure of a sruti."¹ Then he takes two vinas in the sa-grama and changes one of them to ma-grama by lowering the pancama by one sruti. The question that naturally comes to mind is the way it was done. Can any body with precision lower the pancama by one sruti? The musicians of the days of Bharata had keen ears, indeed, to appreciate such niceties when their own music mainly confined itself to the seven prime notes! Sarngadeva comes to the rescue and presents the crude method. He says that 22 wires are to be tuned in such a way that the note of each should be slightly higher than that of the preceding note (uccadhanirmanak) so that no other note may be heard between the two (dhyanyantarasruteh). Leaving the case of the ancient musicians, would it be judicious on the part of any modern musician to trust his ear to such an extent? Ellis writes about the tuning of quarter-tones in a footnote to *The Sensations of Tones* (Helmholtz) p. 265, "It is not to be supposed that these two quartertones, differing only by two cents ($32:31 = 55$ cents, $31:30 = 57$ cents) were exactly produced. . . . Probably no two lyrists tuned alike. My experience of tuning by ear is quite against any approach to accuracy which the figures in the text would imply." There are other reasons against standardised pitches being assumed in ancient Hindu music which need not be discussed here.

About the ma-grama I think Bharata himself failed to grasp the proper significance. There was no earthly use in bringing a scale into existence in which one note differed by one sruti from the corresponding note of the sa-grama and which differed so little from the ma-murchana of sa-grama as to be altogether musically unimportant. It may be accounted for in an entirely different way.

Then Mr. Fox Strangways argues: "For whereas the other gramas produced jatis and gramaragas and ragas—they are successive names for the same thing, an octave-scale (murchana) with a drone—the ga-grama produced none; and, indeed, being a mere murchana of the sa-grama, it could not produce any new ones. It is a very good murchana—commonly known in Bhairavi Rag—and known equally north and south; but it is no grama." Admitting the possibility of

1. Madhyama grame tu srutyapakristah pancamah karya. pancamasya srutyutkarsa-pakarsabhyam yadantaram mardabadayatvatba tabatpramanasrutih.

finding in the ga-grama the present Bhairavi scale (which is doubtful though there is a slight resemblance) the argument is open to criticism for three reasons. Firstly, the ga-grama had its own murchanas and could produce jatis. Secondly, if it was a murchana of sa-grama, there was no necessity for its introduction. Thirdly, it may be easily proved that the name Bhairavi was given to different scales at different periods and the present Bhairavi seems to be a recent arrival in Hindusthani music (See *Raga-Tarangini*, *Hriday Parijat*, *Sangit-Parijat*, *Ragamanjuri*, etc.). The statement of Mr. Fox Strangways in his *Music of Hindostan*, p. 263, "The Gandhara grama is the oldest of the three gramas and may preserve an early Indian tradition" is more probable.

A little may be said on the derivation of two words in the article. The word 'yama' seems to have been wrongly translated by 'twin-notes' in the quotation from Rk Pratisakhya. The word has been used grammatically in the sense of twin (Sect. I) in the same book, but here it stands for the pitch of the voice or roughly for a note (see Uvata's Commentary and Monier Williams' Dictionary).

The word 'sadja' has other derivations than 'born of six'. One derivation interprets it as the 'parent of six notes' which appeals to me, as it makes 'sadja' the starting note of the grama (See *Sangit Ratnakara* for commentary by Kallinath, p. 39.).

However, one cannot help agreeing with Mr. Fox Strangways when he says, "We spoke of Indian musical history as a jungle. So it is, and so it will be until the thinking minds of that country attack it seriously and critically, and cease to waste time over pious beliefs and mathematical tricks, to repeat slokas, often out of their proper connection, instead of to examine problems." I also agree with Mr. Fox Strangways against the use of the harmonium and I have quoted him in support in my articles ; although it will be far from easy to oust it from Hindusthan. Here I may remark in passing that harmony is appearing in a peculiar garb in Hindusthani music scarcely disclosing its identity from melody.

HUSH, INTRUDER !

SUCKLE not, O happy mother !
The fondling at thy breast :
When he grows up he will smother
Fond hopes within thy breast.

Hush, intruder ! hush, for shame !
Our milk we do not sell.
My breasts will dry up all the same ;
And elsewhere breasts must swell.

K. K.



A PATHAN

GAṆAPATI—(Continued)

HARIDAS MITRA

SECTION 9.

LIKE the Śiva Naṭarāja who danced in an extasy of joy the dance of cosmic evolution, Gaṇeśa was also represented as the master dancer, *Naṭeśa* with his father's characteristic snake-garland *nāgopavīta* and the pose called *gaja-hasta* etc. Such images are to be found not only in South India but have been discovered in Bengal, Behar or from Nepal.¹

Lord Śiva—the Auspicious One, also figures as the *Bhairava* 'the Terrible One,' as the *Kapālin*, or the *Kapālabhṛt*, or the *Kapālamālin* or the *Kalpānta-Kāpālika*, or the *Kāpālika*, by all of which names, He is familiar. Both Lord Śiva and his consort, the Devī, are known in this double character as the Destroyer and the Saviour Powers, male or female. It is not unnatural that Gaṇeśa, the darling son of this divine pair should share in their terrible attributes.

But it was in Java — that land of eternal sun-shine and spring, where Death in the form of volcanic eruptions always stared them in the face, that the people realised the ideas of Śiva and Gaṇeśa—as *Bhairava* and *Kāpālika*² better than anywhere else. Again, on the other hand, the known Javanese specimens of Gaṇeśa³ in his more terrible forms are totally unapproachable from the points of view of vigour, majesty and grimness by any known specimens in the whole field of Indian plastic art. But it was very probable that the Javanese artists got their original ideas about these forms from India proper, though they wonderfully improved upon and totally excelled their masters.

Of the various⁴ types of Gaṇeśa images, the *Vāma* forms like, for example, the *Ucchiṣṭa Gaṇapati* and of Gaṇeśa as the *Kāpālika*, call for special notice for many important reasons.

1. See Radhagovinda Basak and Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharyya : *The Catalogue of the Archæolog. Relics in the Museum of V. R. Society*. (Rajshahi, 1919). Also, cf. the Dancing Gaṇeśa Image from Bihar, (Indian Museum, No. 3921, *Archæolog. Section*). Cf. the brass altar from Nepal, containing a beautifully finished figure of dancing Gaṇeśa. (Indian Museum, *Industrial Section Technical Art Series*, 1907, Plate VI).

2. Karl With : *Java* (Hagen, 1920) pp. 107-8 and 150-156; H. H. Juynboll : *Javanische Altertumer* (Leiden, 1909) pp. 12, 13, 21, 25.

3. *Beschrijving van Tjandi Singasari; en de Wolken-tooneelen van Panataran*. *Archæolog. Onderzoek op Java en Madura*. II ('S-Gravenhage, 1909) Plates 40—42; and notice of ditto. on page 28; also see plate 75 of a similar image, and its notice on p. 52; N. J. Krom : *Inleiding tot de Hindoe-Javansche Kunst*. ('S-Gravenhage, 1920) pp. 35—36, Plates 40 & 50; N. J. Krom : *L'Art Javanais*. *Ars Asiatica VIII*, (Paris et Bruxelles, 1926) pp. 58—59, Plate XXVII; S. Raffles : *History of Java* (2nd ed. MDCCCXXX) Vol. I, p. 414; Vol. II, p. 44—46, p. 49.

4. Fifty-four forms of Gaṇeśa are mentioned in Nīlakaṇṭha's commentary on the *Gaṇeśa Gītā*. Thirty-two forms of Gaṇapati are mentioned in the *Mudgala*

Though there are no plastic examples extant, we have descriptions preserved in Indian Literature, of those terrible forms of Gaṇeśa, to which they (Javanese specimens) have close analogies and affinities :—

“सर्वार्थसाधनं चान्यद्विधानं न वक्ष्ये गणेशितुः ।
 नवजीमूतसङ्काशं भिन्नाञ्जनसमप्रभम् ।
 अष्टादशभुजं देवं मेरुमन्दरसन्निभम् ।
 भीममुखं विरूपाक्षं मेघघोषसमध्वनिम् ।
 ‘कालः’ परीधानं नागयज्ञोपवीतिनम् ।
 नानारत्नसमुद्गीतं कोटीराभरणोज्ज्वलम् ।
 शक्तिञ्च परशुं शक्त्या धृततोमरतर्जनम् ।
 (क्षान्तः?) दन्तपद्मगतं पाशमङ्कशञ्च शुक्लार्मुकम् ।
 स्वपुष्पवाशाशाल्यप्रं पात्रं मोदकभूरितम् ।
 कुशिककामलमालाञ्च साभयं वरदं शुभैः ।
 स्वपुष्करेण कलसं दधानं द्विरदाननम् ।
 पद्मासनस्थं देवेशं सर्वदेवैर्नमस्कृतम् ।
 हृत्स्थं सञ्चिन्तयेन्मन्त्री सर्वोपद्रवशान्तये ।”

प्राणतोषिणी । पृ० ६०७ ।

“अतिरक्तकृष्णाम्बुचिन्त्य विभुं वनदर्भपुञ्जमभिमन्त्र्य समम् ।
 पुरुषप्रमाणमथ शत्रुपथे विकिरेतु रोगमुपयान्त्यरयः ॥”

ईशानशिवगुरुदेवपद्धतिः । पटलः १५॥१२२॥

“स्मृतो निजं क्येन गणेश्वरोऽसितः करालकालाम्बुदविग्रहध्वनिः ।
 प्रतोलयित्वा निजपुष्करादरिं प्रचाटयेदौर्वहुताशने क्षिपन् ॥”

तत्रैव । पटलः १६॥६३॥

From the 'Tantras⁵, Saivāgamas⁶, and other literary⁷ sources we know of the high antiquity and the wide-spread popularity of the worship of the Ucchiṣṭa (i.e. Orts) Gaṇapati⁸.

Purāṇa. The Commentator Rāghava Bhaṭṭa on the *Sāradā Tilakam* (ST) speaks of fifty-one forms. The *Merutanta* gives descriptions of ten principal forms of Gaṇeśa. Also, see G. N. Rao : *El. Hind. Ic.* Vol. I, Part I, pp. 51—61; B. C. Bhattacharyya : *Indian Images*, Part I, pp. 24—25; H. Krishna Sastri : *S. Ind. Gods and Goddesses*, pp. 173—176; also see *supra* Section 3, note 11.

5. Āgamavāgiśa Kṛṣṇānanda : *Tantrasāra*, (3rd Ed. Vasumatī Pr. Cal.) pp. 281—83.

6. G. N. Rao : *El. Hind. Ic.* Vol. I, Part I.

7. Ānandagiri : *Saṅkara-digvijaya*; Śrī-Vidyāraṇya : *Ibid*; also see Section 3, Note 11 *supra*.

8. Āgamavāgiśa Kṛṣṇānanda : *Tantrasāra* (3rd Ed., Vasumatī Pr.) p. 282.



GANESA FROM TORENTEMPEL (*Front view*).
LEIDEN, ETHNOGR. MUSEUM—Height : 1.54M.

In Bengal no plastic examples, old or new of Ucchiṣṭa Gaṇapati are at all extant but in Orissa his images are met with, though rarely⁹ while Ucchiṣṭa Gaṇapati is often worshipped in Drāviḍa lands and his images are, rather quite well known from early times, in that part of the country.

The reasons for the utter absence of Ucchiṣṭa Gaṇapati images from Bengal and their comparative rarity in Orissa, are absolutely unknown and unknowable. Yet he figures prominently in written texts.

Equally remarkable are the Javanese Images as Kāpālīka, absolutely rare and unknown to the plastic art of India proper. Yet such rare conceptions have analogies in some *Tāntrika Dhyānas*¹⁰ found in texts,

अच्छिष्टाशुचिर्भूत्वा जपपूजनमाचरेत् । अशुच्छिष्टे न सिध्येत तस्य[स्म]ादेवं समाचरेत् ।
इति तन्त्रान्तरवचनाच्च केषाञ्चिन्मते पूजा नास्ति मनसा जपेत् । ेवाञ्चिन्मते कराङ्गन्यासौ न
स्तः, गणेशोऽहमिति पूर्वोक्तं चिन्तयेत् । गर्गमते विजने वने स्थित्वा रक्तचन्दनानुलिप्तस्तम्बुल-
मुखोच्छिष्ट-मुखो जपेत् । केषाञ्चिन्मते सर्वालङ्कारभूषितः सर्वावस्थाद्य जपेत् । अन्यमते संपूज्य
मोदकं चर्वयन् भृगुमते फलमभ्यन् । विभीषणमते मांसनैवेद्यं दत्त्वा तदेव खादयन् ॥

G. A. Grierson : *Gāṇapatīyas*. ERE, pp. 175—76.

But contrast the meaning of *Ucchiṣṭa* in *Atharva-Veda*. *Ucchiṣṭa-Stotram* XI. 7. M. Bloomfield : *Hymns of the Atharva-Veda*. SBE, XLII. *Apotheosis of the Ucchiṣṭa*, the leavings of the sacrifice, *Brahmaudana*; M. Bloomfield : *The Atharva-Veda and the Gopatha-Brahmaṇa*. *Encyclopædia of Indo-Aryan Research*, pp. 87 & 90. With these *Ucchiṣṭa* 'Types' could there be any connection or analogies of certain forms of Rudra-Siva known as the *Ucchuṣma-Rudras* or *Ucchuṣmas*? G. M. Bolling and J. Negelein : *The Pariṣiṣṭas of the Atharva-Veda*. (Leipzig, 1909) XXVI *Ucchuṣma-Kalpa*.

9. Tradition says that there once lived, near Bhuvaneśvara, in olden times, a shrewd rogue *Bhaṇḍa*. This fellow, one day, called upon the ruling king and supplicated him for assistance in the matter of the erection of a temple dedicated to Gaṇeśa. "Give me, your Lordship", the rogue *Bhaṇḍa* said "only one hundred thousand gold coins and with that, I shall build a temple the spire of which will aspire to reach heaven. Not only that, within that amount of money, I shall also invite to dinner (literally, give water and lay leaves for) one hundred thousand Brahmans and beggars".

The King was credulous enough to hand over the amount, asked for. But as soon as the money was received, the wily rascal proceeded to Dhanuli, *Dhavalagiri* and built a small temple on the summit of its peak. Next, he called together one hundred thousand people and as soon as the leaves were laid out and water given, he drove the poor fellows away. "I only promised", said the wily one, "that the temple-spire would reach heaven, but I did not guarantee that the temple itself should be so big. Again, I only agreed to call one hundred thousand people, and lay leaves and pour water for them. But that did not mean that I should have to feed them." So the credulous King was imposed upon and the poor people were tantalized in this way, by the shrewd rogue. The Gaṇeśa Image was thenceforward called after the *Bhaṇḍa* rascal *Bhaṇḍa Gaṇeśa*.

It was subsequently removed to the temple of Jagannātha at Puri where it still exists in the inner quadrangle^(a) and is a most magnificent example of *Ucchiṣṭa-Gaṇapati*.^(b)

(a) The above story was related to me, in 1920, by Śrī-Sadā-Siva Miśra, a pious and learned and very old *Paṇḍita* of the *Nirvāṇa Maṇḍapa* of the Liṅgarāja Temple at Bhuvaneśvara. I subsequently examined the image while at Puri, the same year.

(b) According to Śrīyukta Aṭalvihārī Ghosh, who compared this Image with *Tāntrika Dhyānas*, the specimen is a *Vīri-Gaṇapati*, which is also a *Vāma* type, apparently. *Vide ST, Paṭala* 13.

10. See, also, *Gaṇeśa's Rituals*, Section 13, *infra*.

obtained from Bengal. Such strange coincidences could never be accidental. There are therefore strong reasons to believe in the cultural and religious affinities between the early Javanese and Bengal peoples.

It is however possible now to adduce archæological and historical proofs in support of this thesis.

We know of the mutual intercourse, cultural or commercial, between India and the Islands of the Indian Archipelago¹¹ dating from long antiquity.

We have positive data that the relationship is traceable even back to the times of the redactions of the *Itihāsa-Purāṇas*¹² in their present forms.

We have more tangible evidences coming down to the Historical periods. While, for the period in question there are Inscriptions of Javanese princes in Indian early *Grantha*¹³ and *Proto-Bengali*¹⁴ scripts, on the one hand, and on the other, by an Indian prince granting lands at the request of a Sumatran Prince to monks at Nālandā in return for an equivalent grant in that country¹⁵.

Gāṇapatya works by a saint from Sumatra, *Suvarṇadvīpa-Guru* or *Suvarṇadvīpa-Yogin*, Dharmakīrti are preserved in Tibetan translations¹⁶.

The existence during the mediæval period, of extreme, fanatical (?) Śivaite sects in Central and Eastern India are attested to by contemporary evidences. The *Matta-Mayūras*, who were worshippers of *Aghora*, one of Śiva's terrible *Vāma* forms, and the *Pāśupatas*, who were also called *Mahāvratins*, etc. are fully represented by epigraphic records¹⁷ and in sculptural relics.¹⁸

11. Sir Charles Elliot: *Hinduism and Buddhism*, 1921, Vol. III. Chap. XL, Java and the Malay Archipelago, pp. 152ff.

12. Sylvain Lévi: *Pour l'histoire du Rāmāyaṇa*. JA, Onzième Série, Tome XI, pp. 141, 147 ff.

13. J. H. Vogel: *The Yūpa Inscriptions of King Mūlavarmā, from Koetj (East Borneo)*. 1918, pp. 192, 193, 220, 231.

14. See *Infra* (Text) and Notes 24 and 25.

15. J. A. Page: *Nālandā Excavations*. JBORS, Vol. IX, 1923, Part I, p. 10; N. G. Majumdar: *Nālandā Copper-plate of Devapāladeva*. (Monographs of V. R. Society, Rajshahi, No. 1, 1926); A. J. Berner Kempers: *The bronzes of Nālandā and Hindu-Javanese art* (1933, E. J. Brill, Leiden).

16. See Appendix. *List of Translations and Original Works in Tibetan*, referred to in Section 7, Note 13, *supra*.

17. Akshaya Kumar Maitreya: *Gauḍa-Lekhamālā*. (V. R. Society, Rajshahi, series 1); Hultzsche: *IA.*, Vol. XV, p. 304.

Nārāyaṇapāla Deva's Bhāgaipur Copperplate Inscription records the gift in his 17th regnal year, of a village to Lord Śiva and the *Pāśupata Acārya Pariṣad* at Kalāṣapota.

18. Rai Bahadur Hiralal: *The Golaki Matha*, JBORS, June, 1927, pp. 143-44. Also see Haridas Mitra: *Sadāśiva Worship in Early Bengal: A Study in History, Art and Religion*, J.P., ASB (N.S.) Vol. XXIX, 1933, No. 1, pp. 203, 4.

Pandit Haraprasad Sastri observes in his Prefatory Note to *ISP*, the 2nd, *Mantrapāda*. (Trivendr. Skt. S., No. LXXII).

"Thus the *Mattamayūra* Vamśa was settled all over Central India from the West Coast to the border of Magadha. They were greatly respected by the Kings

In Northern Bengal have been discovered *Bodhisattva* heads¹⁹ of glazed clay which bear a striking resemblance with Javanese specimens. They are closely similar to the One, preserved in the Riks Museum, Copenhagen²⁰.

Compare, the recently excavated Pāhārpur Temple in North Bengal and the Borobodur Temple in Java are both raised in successive and similar Terraces with passages for *prikraman*, i.e., circumambulation. Many of the Pāhārpur *Kīrttimukhas* in *terracotta* are exactly similar to the Javanese *Vanaspati* heads.

The general view of the *Baraṇḍi-s* of Konarak bear resemblance to that of the temple of Śiva of the Prambanan group²¹, on the one hand ; and also contrast the front view of Singasari²² and a South Indian *Vimāna* of three stories²³. In spite of apparent surface differences, both of these latter, have close underlying similarities.

The inscription at the back of the bronze image of Amoghapaśa of ca. 1265 A.C. from Toempang²⁴ is in Eastern variety of N. Eastern alphabet of India of 12th to 13th Century²⁵.

The script used, is more advanced than that of Vijaya-sena's Deopādā *praśasti* and is intermediate between Ballāla-sena's *Sitāhāṭi* and Lakṣmaṇa-sena's *Tarpaṇḍighi* copper plates. But is more retrograde than the contemporaneous East Indian scripts of the middle of the 13th century.

This characteristically Retro-grade type of the script would show at once, that the scribe was out of touch with Indian mainland and had simply perpetuated unwittingly an older variety of the script (which the immigrants took with themselves to Java) when the inscription was written.

of the Chedi, Paramāra, Rāshtrakūṭa, Chālukya lines and their *Sāmantas*". This sect is also discussed in Rakhaldas Bannerji's article, *Bheṣaghaṭ*. In *Pravāsi*, 1332 B.S.

19. R. G. Basak and D. C. Bhattacharyya : *A Catalogue of the Archaeolog. Relics in the Museum of V. R. Soc* (Rajshahi, 1919). Exhibit

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Pāñcikaḍi Bandyopādhyāya : *Vanḡer Bhāskarya*. In *Sāhitya*, Vol. XXIII, No. 9, 1319 B.S., *Prṣṭha* 570—572.

20. The Riks Museum specimen is illustrated in Havell : *The Ideals of Indian Art*. (Plate, *Bodhisattva Head from Java*).

21. *Vide* Scheiterna : *Monumental Java*. (London, 1912) Plates.

22. *Vide* Tjandī Singasari and Panataran, plate II.

23. *Vide* Rāmraz : *Essay on the Architecture of Hindus*. (London, M. DCCC. XXXIV), Pl. XXVI.

24. *Tjandī Djago*. *Arch. Onderzoek op Java en Madura I*. ('S-Gravenhage, 1904). See the Photo of the Inscr. and also the discussion about Amoghapaśa at pp. 88 ff.

25. R. D. Banerji : *The Origin of the Bengali Script*, (Cal. Univ. 1919) p. 85. "Again in the 4th decade of the thirteenth century of the Vikrama era we find the Western variety in the Bodh-Gayā inscription of Jayaccandra. The alphabet of these inscriptions is altogether different from that used in the Deopādā *Praśasti* and other Eastern variety of inscriptions of the North-Eastern alphabet"

Appendix I. Mahā-Gaṇapati Dhyānas. See Plate I.

(क) “एवं न्यासं विनिर्वर्त्य ध्यानं कुर्यात् समाहितः ।

सिद्धिलक्ष्मीसमारिलष्टपाश्वर्यमर्द्धेन्दुशेखरम् ।

आरक्तवर्णा मातुलुङ्गगदापुण्ड्रे शुकार्मुकम् ।

शूलं सुदर्शनं शङ्खं नीलोत्पलं धान्यमञ्जरीम् ।

निजदन्ता(?)रत्नचण्डा-पारेन्मृपायकैकादशकम् ।

प्रभिन्नकटमानन्दपूर्वमशेष[विघ्न]ध्वंसकरं ।

विघ्ने श्वरं दशभुजं ध्यायेदिति केचित् ।”

PT, प्राणतोषिणी । गणेशप्रकरणं । पृष्ठं ५१६ ।

Compare with (क)

“स्वात्मनि देवं सिद्धिलक्ष्मीसमारिलष्टपाश्वर्यमर्द्धेन्दुशेखरमारक्तवर्णं मातुलुङ्गगदापुण्ड्रे शुकार्मुकशूलसुदर्शनशङ्खपाशोत्पलधान्यमञ्जरीनिजदन्ताञ्जलरत्नकलशपरिष्कृतपायकैकादशकं प्रभिन्नकटमानन्दपूर्वमशेषविघ्नध्वंसनिघ्नं विघ्ने श्वरं ध्यात्वा ॥४॥”

PKS, परशुरामकरूपसूत्रे २५ खखे ।

“स्वात्मनि स्वहृदये । आत्मशब्दो मनसि प्रसिद्धः । मनोहृदययोरेक्यात् तदर्थत्वम् । अर्द्धेन्दुशेखरचतुष्टयार्थः स्पष्टः । मातुलुङ्गं फलविशेषः । गदा आयुधविशेषः । पुण्ड्रेऽक्षुः नाना-रेखायुक्तेषुः, अनेकवर्ण इति यावत् । तद्रूपकार्मुकश्चापः । शूलः आयुधविशेषः । सुदर्शनं चक्रम् । शङ्खपाशौ प्रसिद्धौ । उत्पलं कमलम् । शेषाणि प्रसिद्धानि । एवं मातुलुङ्गादिरत्नकलशान्तैः परिष्कृतं पायकैकादशकं यत्प्रेक्ष्यम् । यद्यपि श्रीमहागणपतिमूर्तेः दश भुजाः प्रसिद्धाः, अत्रैकादशेति विरुद्धं तथाऽपि पाणिपदेन शुण्डादण्डोऽप्यत्र ग्राह्यः, तत्र पाययपरपर्यायेण करः हस्तः इति व्यवहारात्, करी हस्तीति सर्वलोकप्रसिद्धेः । इत्थं च दश भुजाः, एकादशः शुण्डादण्डः इति तदभिप्रायेण सूत्रकृता भगवता पायकैकादशकमित्युक्तम् । इत्यादि ।”

तत्र PKS, प०क०सु० २५ ख० सौभाग्योदयनाम्नि श्रीरामेश्वरकृतकृतौ ।

(ख) “अथ ध्यानं प्रवक्ष्यामि व्याप्तिर्सारदेहतः । क्मापदं खतनुत्रये जठरं पवनाक्षरम् । रवीन्दुवह्निनयनं दशाशाश्रवणद्वयम् । प्रधानशीर्षं भूतेषु बुद्धीन्द्रियविघ्नेष्टितम् । अनादिनिघ्नं दिव्यं तेजोराशिमनामयम् । ध्यायेद्देवं गणेशानं सच्चिदानन्दविग्रहम् ।”

PT, प्राणतोषिणी । गणेशप्रकरणं ।

Compare with (ख)

“अङ्गुष्ठमानं इत्यथ शुद्धरूपकसच्चिदम् । चिन्तयित्वा गणेशानं चिदम्बरसुधारसम् । अभिषिञ्च्य सुरश्रेष्ठं सततं धरणीतले । सर्वरोगविनिर्मुक्तधिरकालं स जीवति ।

शुक्लवर्णं गणेशानं दशबाहुमदोत्कटं । शुक्लाम्बरधरं सौम्यं चिच्छशाङ्कामृतप्लुतम् ।
भावयेद्धृदयाम्भोजे नित्यं निर्मलमानसः । मन्त्री गरुडवत् सद्यस्त्रिविधं हरेते विषं ।”

तत्रैव । पृ० ६०२ ।

“ह्माङ्घ्रि पद्मं खलनुं रसोदरं रवीन्दुवह्निप्रिदृशं मरुदध्वनिम् ।
प्रधानशुद्धाक्षशिरोविचेष्टितं समस्तलोकास्पदविश्वविग्रहम् ॥२३॥
पिशङ्गकौशेयनिभाम्बराम्बरं प्रलम्बतुन्दाश्रितविश्वविष्टपम् ।
विचित्रहारोल्लसितोत्पलसं भुजङ्गमाधीशकृतोपवीतकम् ॥२४॥
छजटाजूटार्पितहेममौलिनं कलामयं ज्ञानशशाङ्कशेखरम् ।
प्रपञ्चविद्यामयचारुविग्रहं समस्तशुभैकगुणास्पदं विभुम् ॥२५॥”

IS' P, ईशानशिवगुरुदेवपद्धतिः । पूर्वार्द्धे । प० १५ ।

ध्यायेदध्याम्बरसरोजरसामृताङ्गं व्योमात्मकं गणपतिं द्रुतहेम्बरम् ।
पीताम्बरं स्वर्णाभूषणमाल्यगन्धं लम्बोदरं त्रिशयनं शशिखण्डमौलिम् ॥२७॥”

तत्रैव । पूर्वार्द्धे । प० १६ ।

- (ग) “अथ व्याप्तिं समाख्याय साकारं ध्यानमुच्यते । अनाकुलमना मन्त्री भावयेदकुलपदम् ।
तत्र मध्ये समासीनं गजवक्त्रं त्रिलोचनम् । एकदन्तं दशभुजं कमन्दु-ग्रीवं महोदरम् ।
पद्मस्थदक्षचरणालम्बिमध्यपदाम्बुजम् । तस्यादित्यसङ्काशं पीताम्बरसमा- तम् ।
सन्ध्यारुणकपर्दान्तसौवर्णाभरणान्वितम् । शशाङ्कार्द्धकृतोत्संसं नागयज्ञोपवीतिनम् ।
रत्नौघहारोल्लसितविशालवरवक्त्रसम् । मणिमुक्ताप्रवालाढ्यं कटिसूत्रपरिष्कृतम् ।
किङ्किणीमालया बद्धवामजङ्गुविराजितम् । दक्षाघो हस्तामारम्य धारया लम्बमानया ।
गदाशूलवर्तिकद्रु विषाणान् दक्षिणैर्भुजैः । शास्त्रप्रपाशचक्रे क्षुचयस्वीजपूरकान् ।
बीजपूरं गदामिक्षुचापशूलस्रग्दर्शनान् । अञ्जपाशोत्पलप्रीहिविषाणानपरे विभुः ।
वामेऽङ्गधरमञ्जीरविलसन्नखाम्बुजम् । वामाङ्गसंस्थया शक्त्या सर्वालङ्कारयुक्त्या ।
अम्भोजकरयाश्लिष्टं सर्वैश्वर्यैस्तुल्यप्रदम् । लीलया रत्नकलसं पुष्कराग्रे निधाय च ।
परितः साधकं शश्वद्वर्णन्तं रत्नवर्षणैः । प्रोच्छ्रितस्तोत्रात्तेन मन्त्रोलुपचट्पदान् ।
निर्वासयन्तं सततं देवास्त्रनिषेवितम् । वीरनादोद्धृतोद्गीतैः स्तोत्रैः सम्पूज्यमानसः ।
देवं महागणेशानं ध्यात्वा साधकपुङ्गव इति ।”

PT, प्राणतोषिणी । गणेशप्रकरणं ।

Compare with (ग)

“ततो ध्यानम्—

नवरत्नमयं द्वीपं स्मरेद्विस्तारसाम्बुधौ । तद्वीचिचातपर्वणन्तं मन्दमास्तसेवितम् ॥
मन्दारपारिजातादिकल्पवृक्षलताकुलम् । उद्गतरत्नच्छायाभिरक्षीकृतभूतलम् ।

उद्यानकन्देऽप्युद्भासितविगन्तरम् । तस्य मध्ये पारिजातं नवरत्नमयं स्मरेत् ।
 श्रुतुभिः सेवितं बहुभिरनिघं प्रीतिवर्द्धनैः । तस्याधस्तात् पीठे रक्षिते मातृकाम्बुजे ।
 षट्कोणस्थं महागणपतिं स्मरेत् । हस्तीन्द्राननमिन् चूडमण्यच्छायं त्रिनेत्रं रसा-
 दारिलष्टं प्रियया सपथकरया साङ्गस्थं सङ्गतम् । वीजापूरगदाधनुस्त्रिशुल्बकयुक्चक्राम्बुपाशोत्पल-
 व्रीह्यप्रस्वविषायास्त्रकलसान् हस्तैर्वहन्तं भजे । गण्डपालगलहानपूरलालसमानसान्
 द्विरेफान् कर्णतालार्भां वारयन्तं मुहुर्मुहुः ॥ कराग्रधरागणेशं भवकूविनिस्तुतैः
 रत्नवर्षैः प्रीययन्तं साधकान् मदविह्वलम् । मायिक्यमुकुटोपेतं रत्नाभरणभूषितम् ॥
 एवं ध्यात्वा मानसैः संपूजयेत् ।”

TS, तन्त्रसारे । महागणेशमन्त्रः ।

MOSLEM CALLIGRAPHY

M. Ziauddin

INTRODUCTION.

OF all the arts that Moslems cultivated, calligraphy is, without doubt, the most refined. Writing as a decorative art was never practised by any people with such conscientious devotion as the Arabs gave it; nor did this art ever develop such an amazing variety of styles and expressions as it did among the people of Persia. These peoples valued written words more dearly than they did precious stones. To them the art of penmanship was superior to all other arts. Such was the lure of the line that from the monarch down to the humblest of writers, each vied with the other in writing beautifully. A calligraphist of repute was the artist whom people loved and honoured most and kings felt proud of possessing in their kingdom.

Moslems, so eager to avoid the painting and modelling of human figures, (there was no injunction of the Prophet to that effect, as it is commonly supposed), lest they relapse into their old ways of worshipping idols, the terror of which crime had been driven deep into their hearts by the thundering warnings of the Koran, devoted all their love and artistic ingenuity to the pious work of copying the Holy Word. A few of these copies that have survived from the early centuries of the Moslem era, are in themselves such idols of perfect rhythm and beauty that they leave the beholder inarticulate with admiration.

Islam, like some other great religions, appeared in the world as a magic force of Art. It gave a mighty impetus to the creative faculties of those who came under its sway. It welded tribes into a nation and set the imagination of men aflame. Important centres of culture like Mekka, Medina, Kufa, Damascus, Baghdad and Basra, etc., sprang up and worked like luminous melting pots where the remnants of ancient cultures were brought together and made to cohere into a brighter unity. The culture that later came to be distinguished as Islamic was the product of this fusion, and the language of art that was developed contained in it all the essential elements of pre-Islamic classical cultures.

Of the arts that were thus developed, the most remarkable became the decorative arts, amongst which the one that received its most

characteristic development at the hands of the Moslems was the art of calligraphy. It was begun and carried on in its early stages by the Arabs, but received its highest fulfilment at the hands of the Persians. The book, with its beautifully written pages and finished cover, acquired such significance in the imagination of the artists that even architecture was stamped with its character and the wall surfaces were often finished as book covers.

The Arabs had a system of writing in pre-Islamic days. It had two styles: monumental and cursive. The cursive system was known to the Beduin poet, (at any rate by sight, since the Beduins were illiterate people), to whom it did not appeal as beautiful, for he has compared the scenes of death and desolation to words scribbled on parchment. "... the traces of a dwelling place which I saw and which filled me with sorrow," sang Imru'ul-Qais, "resembled the handwriting of a book upon South Arabian palm-bast."¹ Another poet says: "I came from Ziyad like one who is bereft of reason, my legs tracing different characters, writing on the road a *lām-ulif*."² This quick and cursive style of the old Arabic script, used on soft material, like leather, palm-bast, parchment, papyrus, etc., must have existed prior to the monumental script. This latter and more developed script, used on harder material, like camel bones, especially ribs and shoulder blades, potsherds, flat white stones, wood and metals, became a great improvement in artistic effect. The Arab sense of geometrical symmetry and mathematical precision is well displayed in the execution of inscriptions wrought in this character. This style, as for example in the inscriptions of Yemen, has been admired as one of the most beautiful specimens of the writings of antiquity. As this style was used uniformly throughout Arabia proper, it must have been in use from very remote times.



Fig. 1.

Early Himyaritic script
on a bronze tablet in bas
relief.

From the point of view of adaptability to artistic use, unless I am biased, the Arabic script is by far the best we know of. It supplies vertical or oblique strokes and lines inclinable to any degree of angle, which, when merely repeated, would produce a linear rhythm delightful to the eye. This flexibility of line and stroke put at the disposal of the calligraphist, squares, circles, ovals, cubes, and loops, entwining and interlacing shafts, manageable to almost an infinite variety of quaint proportion and graceful curvature. During the Abba-

1. *'Ajab Nāmah*, A Volume of Oriental Studies, 1922, pp. 164, 165.

2. *Ibid.*

side period, the golden age of Islamic civilization, an immense number of styles of writing had developed which are extinct now. It was in that age that all the possibilities of the artistic utility of the Arabic script were explored. The variability of the Arabic script and its extreme sensitiveness to artistic suggestion is indeed amazing. All the letters possess a final flourish which may be turned in any becoming curve or angle, to any suitable length, to any proportion, in harmony or in contrast with the vertical shafts standing upright at their sides, marking time, as it were, to the flow of the music of composition.

Copying the Koran was deemed an extremely meritorious act. Aurangzeb, they say, lived on the money he earned by copying the holy Text. Arthur Upham Pope observes : "The Koran was the sole way to life and salvation. Upon it depended the whole structure of society, the order of the day and the path to the future. Supernatural in origin, the final authority and standard of the good in life, it was deserving of every tribute that human skill could lavish upon it, and from the tenth to the twelfth century its pages were ornamented with such knowledge and such sure feeling for splendid design that these early pages remain today almost the greatest achievement in the history of Abstract art."¹

The Moslems received the tradition of calligraphic art from the ancients. In Arabia itself, as I have already mentioned, a decorative style had been in use in pre-Islamic period. The Jews and the Christians had been copying their sacred literature with love and devotion. However, Islamic calligraphy owes its development more to the impetus that it received from the Manichaeans than to any other source. Although the Syrians were the first to initiate the Moslems into the art of moulding words into graceful forms, it was the Manichaean tradition that spurred it on to artistic heights.

The followers of the artist-prophet Mani were still very much devoted to the practice of calligraphying their scriptures when the Arabs conquered Persia. Their religion was particularly bound up with art. Whereas all the other messengers of God had received only a verbal revelation from their Lord, Mani alone had been vouchsafed divine paintings in illus-

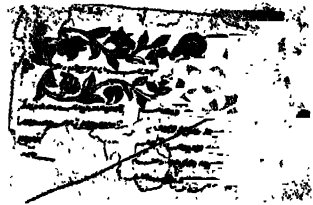


Fig. 2.
Fragment of a Manichaean page.

1. An Introduction to the Persian Art, 1930, p. 102.

tration of the stories revealed to him. He alone was endowed with prophecy as well as the miracle of art. When the ruling religion of Persia—Zoroastrianism—decided to save humanity from the menace of this new cult of light and shade, the revealed book was thrown into the fire before the eyes of the prophet. They say that rivulets of gold gushed out of the leaves as the flames licked them to ashes. In spite of successive persecutions, the followers of Mani continued to exist and they copied their literature with gorgeous illuminations. Till today the decorative splendour of the Book of Mani and the skill of his pen in tracing divine beauty are proverbial in Persia. Mani had invented a new script by blending the Syriac with Estrangelo. His works were written in this artistic script (Fig. 2.).

Moslems knew the Manichaeans by the name of Zindiq. They were famous for spending lavishly on the reproductions of their works. An Arab author has reported an interesting controversy in which Ibrahim Sindi says sarcastically : “I should be pleased if the Zindiq were to spend less on the whitest, finest paper and the blackest ink and on the training of calligraphists, for, indeed, I do not know of more beautiful paper than that of their books, nor of finer writings than one sees in their books. . . .” To this the other replies: “When the Zindiqs lavish so much wealth on the decoration of their books it is like the spending of the Christians on their churches. . . .”¹ Such works must have existed down to the fifth century of the Moslem era. Dr. Stein discovered a Manichaean manuscript at Turfan, in Central Asia, regarding which Professor A. von Le Coq writes that it is “written in the clear unequivocal letters of the Manichaean alphabet . . . beautiful and clear.”² What we must particularly note is that this writing contains the punctuation mark, “the characteristic sign hitherto exclusively observed in Manichaean, namely, one or two black dots surrounded by little circles or ovals executed in red lead or vermillion.”³ In the earliest copies of the Koran a single verse of the Text was marked by a single circle ; a group of five verses was marked by a circle with a point at the top, usually in red.⁴

While the traditions and conventions of many peoples were at the back of the Moslem art, what was peculiarly Islamic in it was its lyrical character. In lyricism lay the individuality of the Moslem art.

1. Islamic Civilization, Khuda Bakhsh, Vol. I. p. 101.

2. Serindia, Vol. II, p. 819, plate, CLX II ; JRAS, 1911, p. 277.

3. Ibid., p. 278.

4. Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol. I. p. 383, 384.

Pure Persian art of the Achaemenid and the Sasanid periods, as Mr. Roger Fry has observed, is devoid of lyrical element.¹ It seems, with the spread of Islam, a phase of romantic mood passed over Persia. What can be more lyrical than Persian poetry and the Nasta'liq calligraphy of the Moslem Persia ?

As I have mentioned, ornament is the speciality of the Moslem art, and, among their ornamental schemes, calligraphy has claimed their best attention. As in all other Moslem countries, so also in Egypt, "no art has been so much honoured or so assiduously cultivated," remarks Thomas Arnold, "as that of calligraphy. Whether in architecture or in the minor arts of domestic ornament, the highly decorative Arabic script was applied to all materials used, stone, plaster, wood, metal, ceramics, glass, textiles, etc."²

A line of calligraphic decoration, like a painting, stands in perfect harmony with its background. Its adaptability ensures its fitness with the surrounding scheme and gives it grace and life. On the other hand, its abstract nature calls for even greater artistic skill than is perhaps necessary in the case of painting pictures. In a painting, say of a beautiful lady, the artist can count on the co-operation of the beholder, who is familiar with the image in life and easily recognises in it life, grace and movement. In calligraphy the lines in themselves have to be so supple and round in form and graceful in movement that they must give the impression of being alive to the sight. Lines must move with grace and rhythm, while each of the curves and strokes keeps its balance in perfect poise. Thus rhythm, movement and grace have to be produced, not by reproducing the objects that possess them in actual life but by realising them in lines abstracted from those objects. Lines have to be sensitive and soulful, and, as it were, capable of muscular response to the slightest touch. In ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, in which letters are mostly represented by natural objects, like hawk, vulture, duck, fly, man, etc., the beauty of the penmanship lies in the graceful outlines of the natural objects themselves. A mere glance at such a writing, for example the one inscribed on the ebony chair found in the tomb of Queen Hetep-Heres,³ reveals the source of the artistic effect in the beautiful drawing of the objects which stand for letters. In the calligraphy of the Arabic script, however, the entire effect has to

1 The Exhibition of the Persian Art, Burlington House, 1931, Intr. p. XVIII.

2 The Art of Egypt, edited by Sir E. Denison Ross, 1931, p. 72.

3. Ibid. p. 116, fig. 2, Plate 4.

be achieved by the movement and poise of the lines, made, as it were, of the stuff of grace itself.

It has been observed that calligraphy has a subtle affinity with human and floral forms which gives it a remarkable adaptability to

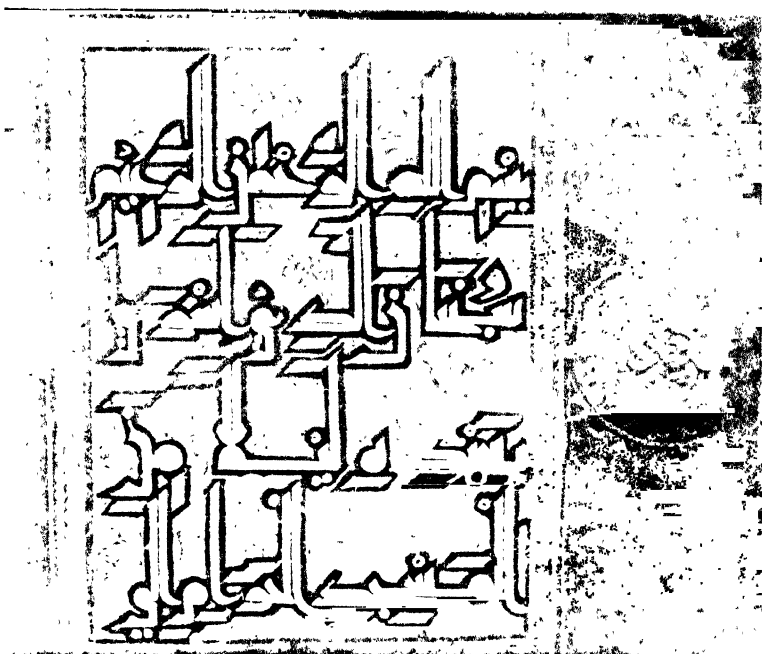


Fig. 3.

A Koran page in ornamental Kufic by Abu Bakr of Ghazna, 566 A.H.

pictorial rhythm. Mr. Roger Fry, comparing Chinese calligraphy with that of the Persians, remarks: "In this respect the fact that Chinese and Persian scripts are based on a much more free and flowing rhythm [than the Roman,] is of great importance since it enables the painter and decorative artists to combine calligraphy with pictorial forms in a single work of art. And in both countries alike we find this constant intermingling of script and painting. Perhaps in the matter of freedom and flow we must give the palm to the Arabic script, on account of its greater continuity. . . . And we find," he further observes, "both in miniature and pottery painting, the happiest and most unexpected effects produced by the incorporation of inscriptions in the pictorial or decorative designs. Even in their architecture . . . these inscrip-

tions play a great part. . . . Nothing, I think, is more typical of the subtlety and ingenuity of the Persian genius than this peculiar interweaving of pictorial and literary elements through the special possibilities of the Arabic script. The practice seems to show how important a position system of *linear rhythm* held in the aesthetic sensibility of Persian artists."¹

The calligraphist studies the flow of lines, their proportions and positions with a view to the rhythm he intends to impart to the given surface. The rhythmic harmony of strokes or curves of various patterns is studied with the mental vision of a composer of music (figs. 3, 4, 5.). Letters appear to the calligraphist as so many notes of music, and he sits to work out melodies out of them. A good painter is always a calligraphist. It is therefore not surprising, "that the lines with which the Persian painters outlined their human and animal figures express movement with an easy control and economy which is the envy of the Western artist."²

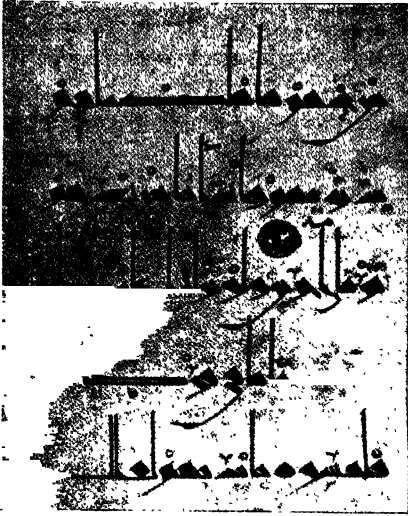


Fig. 4.

A Koran page in Kufic, 11th century, preserved
in Toledo Museum of Art.

Among the ornamental designs that Europe borrowed

from Moslems, calligraphic decoration was a conspicuous one. So great was the charm of the Arabic script as an ornament, that the Christian king Offa of Mercia (757-96) had his coin stamped with the Moslem religious formula in Kufic.³ Another remarkable instance is the Irish bronze-gilt cross, of about the 9th century A.D., which has the word *bismillah* inscribed in the middle of it in Kufic. "In neither case," observes A. H. Christie, "can the workers have realized the significance of the strange writing they copied or adopted, for inscriptions so flagrantly

1. Persian Art, ed. by Sir E. Denison Ross, p. 34.

2. An Introduction to the Persian Art, p. XIX.

3. The Legacy of Islam, pp. 106, 113, 114.

Muhammadian could hardly have been set knowingly upon the coinage of a Christian king, or inserted on a sacred emblem."¹ In an Italian painting—the Resurrection of Lazarus, in the Arena Chapel at Padua—the right shoulder of the figure of Christ bears a lace, decorated with an imitation of Kufic. Fra Angelico and Fra Lippo had a particular weakness for the Arabic script and employed it even for sleeves of the Virgin and the borders of her robe.² Not only the decorative script, but other “ornamental details derived from Moslem sources became increasingly numerous in craft works wrought in Christian Europe.”³

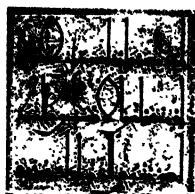


Fig. 5

The art of Arab penmanship, like the other branches of their culture, reached its zenith of perfection in Spain. Their greatest achievement in architecture and architectural decorative art is seen in the palaces of Alhambra (figs. 6, 7). Even in ruins there is nothing in the world to be compared with them. “Its value for the history of art is incalculable. . . . Alhambra is unique.” remarks J. Strzygowsky.⁴ The delicate filigree work, the bewilderingly intricate tracery and the brilliant mosaic with superbly beautiful Kufic and other styles of calligraphic writings cut in relief, geometrically intricated bands in arabesques, which pleasantly confuse the observer with kaleidoscopic delusion, letters lengthening in intertwining shafts in profusion of beauty like water from a gay fountain, writings encircled by thickly clustering leaves waving on almost trembling twigs, reveal the standard of excellence that Spain had reached under the Moors. Pitchers placed in the niches of archs have beautiful verses written on them. One of them reads : “Incomparable is this basin ! Allah, the



Fig. 6.
Alhambra. Capital and ornaments.

1. The Legacy of Islam, 1931, p. 114.

2. Ibid. p. 154.

3. Ibid. p. 114.

4. Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol. 1, p. 278.

exalted one, desired that it should surpass every thing in wonderful beauty." Such pitchers placed in niches and inscribed with calligraphic writings are a speciality of the Alhambra. "None is powerful save God" is the phrase that one faces on all sides of the walls of the Alhambra.

In Spain, as in Persia, blue and vermillion colours were most lavishly used in mosques and palaces. Very often the whole surface was coloured red or blue and then worked on in various hues. When the ground surface was red, the writing and other floral and linear designs were painted blue, black, green and yellow. The single tombstone left in Spain (Alhambra) is painted blue and the writing is done in gold. As in the main features of the decorative plans of architecture, the schemes of colour too appear to have been borrowed from the illuminations of

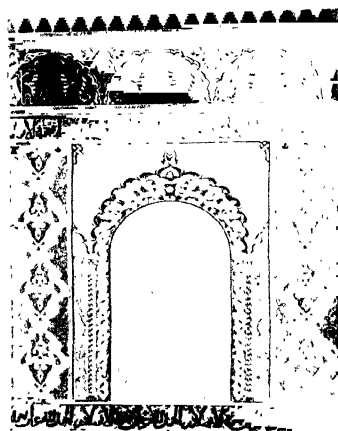


Fig. 7.

Alhambra, a window.



Fig. 8.

A mosque lamp (Granada).

books. Wall surfaces were divided into rectangular panels with raised margins, and either completely covered with intricate stucco work or glazed tiles, or with brilliant mosaic faience. The whole surface from top to bottom was ablaze with the grandeur of colours. The deep blue or red was the favourite ground colour; golden yellow, white, black, emerald green and turquoise lined the decorations. The Kufic or Naskhi in white or gold on deepest blue gave an effect which can not be described in so many words. Referring to the glazed ceramics and their decorative motifs, Dr. Pope writes: "Arabesque and stellate medallions, stately personages or gay, galloping cavaliers, lordly Kufic, or Kufic as delicate as stucco cadenzas, rendered in gold and cobalt, green, turquoise, maroon and black, were all woven into the loveliest of compositions. Theme and material, colour and pattern are as unified and as gracious as a sonnet."¹

1. Studio, Jan. 1931, p. 14.

Arabs had developed a very high standard in the craft of leather tanning and that of making parchments. To Kufa belongs the credit of discovering methods of tanning leather. After tanning the leather or parchment membrane, they dyed it in silver or gold and polished it to such a degree that it reflected the face of the observer like a mirror. The writing was executed in vermilion, green, black or blue. The ink they made has not yet been successfully imitated in Europe. Book covers were lavishly decorated with gold and silver and sometimes inlaid with jewels.

The Arabic script, both in its simple and intricate ornamental forms, charmed the eye like magic. It was imitated as arabesque and supplied pure calligraphic motifs in the decoration of churches and shrines in Italy, Spain and France. And thus, quite unknowingly, as Mr. S. P. Scott remarks in his *History of the Moorish Empire in Europe* (Vol. III, ch. 29.), verses of the Koran were quoted on church walls in Kufic. He remarks, quoting a French author, that the lofty gate of the most important church of St. Peter was decorated with the Moslem confession of faith in Arabic script. Obviously, the script must have in it something of the universal appeal to the artistic nature of man, for, otherwise, Christians would not have allowed this Ara-

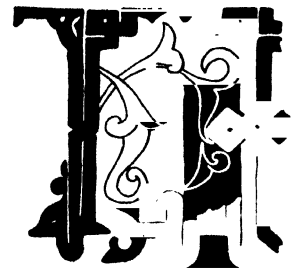


Fig. 10.

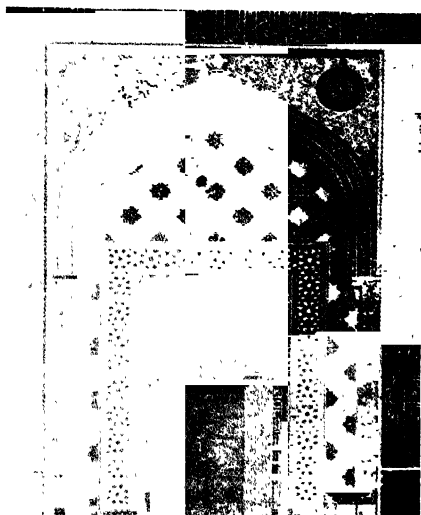


Fig. 9.

Mihrab of the Jamil mosque at Fatehpur Sikri, 1556-1605 A. D., the architrave is painted deep blue, sculptured with verses from the Koran in Naskh, overlaid in gold.

bic script to enter their sanctuaries. In spite of such a catholic appreciation that calligraphy inspired, Mr. E. Herzfeld makes the strange remark : "It is undoubtedly an expression of a certain bigotry on the part of the Muslims, that they inscribe nearly every article of artistic craftsmanship with some verse from the



Fig. 11.

The inscription in floriated Kufic on the tomb of Mahmud of Ghazna.

Koran. . . .”¹ Out of such inscriptions, he is ready to accept certain inscriptions “with gratitude because of their historical importance.”² Otherwise such writings appear to him “rather a peculiarly decorative use of the characters . . .” which are “the confession of faith or with innumerable, sometimes rather pointless, formulas of blessing or congratulations. . . .”³ The formula of the confession of the



Fig 12.

Kufic inscription in plaster relief, with an undercurrent of spiral stalks—on the mihrab of the Mosque of Yahya bin Abul Qasim, 543/1148, at Mosul. The name of the calligraphist is signed as Mustapha Baghdadi.

Moslem faith, which in a few letters contains the whole of Islam, is, naturally, very important to a Moslem. This confession, when abbreviated to its initial letters is summed up in letters, L. A. M. (the three letters with which the Koran begins are A. L. M.)

These three letters have been used as architectural motifs of decoration with incomparable ingenuity of designs. As symbol of faith few Moslems would be able to recognize their confession of faith in these three letters, but men of all faiths would undoubtedly find them beautiful. Mr. E. Herzfeld admits, however, that the decorative value of these letters lies in “their rhythmical and symmetrical shape.”⁴ Furthermore, ignoring the calligraphic value of such decorations, he

1. Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol I, p. 364.
2. Ibid, p. 364.
3. Ibid, p. 365.
4. Ibid, p. 365.



Fig. 13.



Fig. 14.



Fig. 15.



Fig. 16.

Floriated Kufic decorations from lustrated plates.

observes with regret that these letters, "the nature of which has been completely misunderstood, are found on objects made by non-Moslem artisans especially on Western imitation of Arab works of art."¹ Later on this decorative writing "developed into a particular kind of linear ornament," he remarks, "in which all consciousness of the original nature of the letters was lost."² This was bound to take place. The peculiarity of the Arab mind lies in its tendency to abstract the qualities of Nature and give them an independent form. They abstracted the linear rhythm of their calligraphy and applied the new rhythmical elements thus gained to their arabesque.

After the extermination of the Moors from Spain, Moslem masons were sought to build churches and shrines. They were not paid for their labour, but, in return, were exempted from the poll tax. These Moslem builders must be to a great extent responsible for the style that Christian architecture developed and also for the introduction of the calligraphic motifs.³ For it was actually after the fall of the Moslem rule in Spain that Christian architecture came into existence. "The Muhammadans," writes Mr. Owen Jones, "very early in their history, formed and perfected a style of art peculiarly their own. . . .

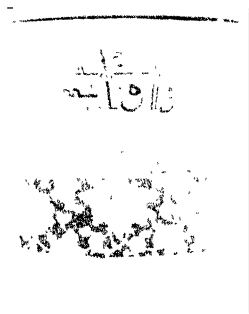


Fig. 17.

Anatolian lamp, XVI century.



Fig. 18.

Cup with decorative Kufic, XII—XIII centuries, Ray.

1. Ibid, p. 365.

2. Ibid, p. 365.

3. The Legacy of Islam, p. 13.



Fig. 19.
Mihrab, with Kufic and Naskhi
inscriptions in mosaic faience,
XIV century, Persia

It can hardly be said that Christianity produced an architecture peculiarly its own, and entirely freed from traces of paganism, until the twelfth or thirteenth century."¹ "The carved inscriptions used decoratively in late Gothic work," writes Mr. M. S. Briggs, "were anticipated in the ninth century at Ibn Tulun's mosque at Cairo, but inscriptions in Kufic characters penetrated far into France during the Moslem occupation of her southern provinces, and rare examples of ornament even in England are believed to show Arabic influence."² Prof. Lethaby considers the bands of ornament on the retablo of

Westminster Abbey and also on certain stained-glass windows to be the result of the influence of Moslem calligraphy on English decorative art.³

While we possess relics of Moslem arts of all the countries that are or were under Moslem rule, Spain alone has an almost blank page. Libraries, mosques, palaces, baths, and indeed all the main and minor products of art were destroyed by Christian barbarians of Spain with a thor-

Fig 20.
Painted ivory box
XIII, century.



Fig 21.
Baghdad silk, X--XI
century, with Kufic
writing in arch bands,
woven in red, yellow,
black and white.

oughness unparalleled in the history of humanity. As S. P. Scott has observed, the clergy declared Arabic script to be magic formulas and Arabic works to be books on magic; laws were enforced to wipe off every sign of them from Spain. And thus we have lost what must have been of the greatest value to art.⁴ Books were hunted up, piled up in crossways and set to fire. Ferdinand IV. and Charles V. started the scheme of destroying the remains of Moslem culture in

1. The Grammar of Ornament, 1910, p. 57.
2. The Legacy of Islam, p. 178.
3. Ibid, p. 178, foot note.
4. History of the Moorish Empire in Europe, Vol. III, ch. 29th.

Spain.¹ Philip II. gave orders to the effect that every stone bearing Arabic writing should be broken to pieces. One may wonder how the silver-gilt-plated casket, adorned with pearls, belonging to the scholar

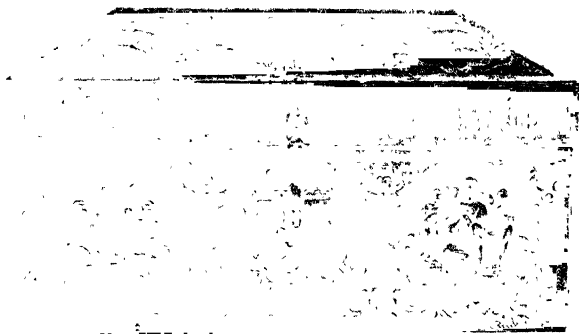


Fig. 22.
An ivory casket, XI century, with floriated Kufic on the border of the lid, in the cathedral of Pamplona.

king of Spain, Hakam II., and bearing a beautiful inscription in Kufic that invokes blessing on the owner, found its way on the high altar of the cathedral of Gerona.²

Calligraphy, like all fine arts, is beyond definition. We cannot bring out its points of beauty by analyzing it into its original components. Hence, particularly in the case of decorative calligraphy, it is difficult to understand or appreciate its complete artistic significance without referring the original to its proper setting and back-ground. Most of the illustrations used in this study are pieces of calligraphy cut off from their main body, bereft of their original colours and can therefore hardly give us any exact idea of their native artistic effect. In the next section I intend to deal with only one of the various styles of the Moslem calligraphic art, namely, the Kufic, and will try to present to the readers some of the most characteristic decorative variations of this style.³ The merit and the ornamental charm of each variation of the main style can be appreciated by comparing it with the others. I must also mention that I have not considered it necessary to burden the study by giving the usual chronological list of the early calligraphists. About most of them nothing more than their name and the style they wrote in is known. Of their works nothing worth mentioning has come down to us. Moreover, as in architecture and

1. The Moors in Spain, S. Lane Poole, 5th ed. pp. 272, 273.

2. Ibid, p. 148.

3. The remaining styles will be dealt with in two more sections in the next number of this Journal.

painting, it is difficult to determine exactly the period of the development of Kufic styles, which, like other styles of later periods, appear and disappear with the rise and fall of dynasties. Styles have evolved into different styles so slowly and imperceptibly that we can only refer to their dates in terms of the centuries of the reigns of certain kings.

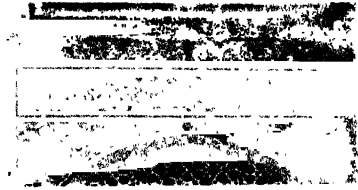


fig. 23.

Madrasat-ul-Attarin (Fez), a panel with floriated Kufic in mosaic faience.

KUFIC

THE Kufic or the angular variety of the Arabic script, has been traced to about a hundred years before the foundation of the town Kufa (17/638), to which place the style owes its name. It was first in this town that this particular way of writing was officially made use of. This official recognition gave the style its present name. It was a hieratic script and was treated as such throughout the period it continued to be employed. For about the first five centuries the holy Koran was exclusively written in the various forms of this style (figs. 24, 25, 26, 27, 29).

For the first two centuries of the Moslem era, they were mostly the Arabs who cultivated the art of calligraphy. During this period calligraphy does not seem to have advanced beyond its strict use, that is, it did not evolve any purely decorative form. The Koran dated the 168 A. H. is in simple Kufic. The simple and unshakable faith of the early Moslems, which the bold and rhythmic oratory of the Koran had inspired in the proud and unbending Arab, did not consider the fickle and flowing style of writing used by the traders in towns to be at all a suitable medium for the holy Word to be couched in. The Kufic was just the script for it; it suited in form the bold character of the revelation.

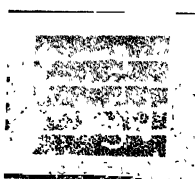


fig. 24.

Carpet with a verse from the Koran in cursive Kufic



Fig. 5.

Fig. 6.

Fig. 27.

These earliest forms of the Arabic script, the cursive and the monumental, are immediately derived from the Nabataean, which itself is ultimately traceable to the Phoenician of the eighth century B. C. It was termed Himyaritic, Himyar being the town where it was current before the advent of Islam. Some of the inscriptions in this character are adorned with animal and tree figures, done in conventional styles. The Sabaean inscriptions have, in some instances, their last letter decorated with an ornamental design.¹

The Himyaritic or Sabaean writing, owing to the hardness of the

1. Indian Antiquary, Jan. 1875, p. 28.

material it was written on, developed a blunt, straight and sharply angular character (fig. 28). The other more

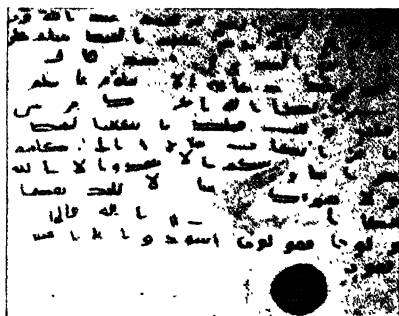


Fig. 28.

Letter of the Prophet to the "Mukaukas"
written in the 7th year of the Hijra.

common system, due to the soft medium it was used on and also the necessity of writing quickly, developed a flowing and cursive form. This cursive style, as it further developed into the Arabic script, later called Naskhi, was in fact used on papyrus and parchment, before the angular Kufic came into existence. Historically, the Arabic script is the youngest the world has produced, but with regard to its use in the world today, it is second only to the Roman.

The cursive style, when written after the Syriac model of writing, to which script the Arabic one is very closely related, developed into regular Kufic (fig. 25). The main features of the Kufic mode of writing are its vertical and oblique lines. The earlier cursive style, as used in pre-Islamic days, had already developed the fundamental character of the Arabic script, namely, the ligatures that joined one letter to another. These connecting strokes were to prove of immense importance in their use as graceful ornamental flourishes. This script was, however, defective in short vowels, it had no diacritical dots to differentiate similar letters from each other. These marks it received during the 2nd century of the Moslem era.

Kufic writing seems to have reached its extreme angular character by the end of the 2nd century of the Hijra. Thenceforward the rounder script begins to curb it to softer curves. The 3rd century Koran has rounder curves and slantingly pointed tips (fig. 33). By the middle of the 4th century the Kufic gives way to the Naskhi, that is, to a little rounder script, and, more or less, ceases to be employed in the copying of the Koran, though continues to be used as ornament. The Fatimid dynasty of Egypt (550/1155) made the most of the Kufic style, and practically with the passing of this dynasty, the script also fell out of use and became obsolete, except in architectural and ceramic decorations. Its most fantastically ornamental forms, intertwining, interlacing, floral and geometrical, evolved during the 5th and the 6th centuries of the Hijra.

In the beginning, as already mentioned, it was the simple Syrian model of calligraphy that suggested to the Arabs further improve-

ments in their script. Diacritical dots and signs were adopted after the Syriac model. This influence of the Syriac system of writing had actually begun before the advent of Islam. The vowel marks were also taken from the Syriac, but these were different from those in use now. They were indeed the Syrian Moslems, familiar with the Syriac and Hebrew scripts, who are known to have first improved the lettering of the Arabic script. They determined the form of each letter of the Arabic script in its simple and compound form and defined its vowel marks, after the standard of the Syriac.¹ This step must be considered the first definite move towards the development of the art of calligraphy. Different styles of Kufic developed gradually. Abul Aswad (69 A. H.), a disciple of the Kalif 'Ali, is reported to have improved the calligraphy of the Koran and introduced vowel marks in the form of dots. His system was followed for about a century. His disciples improved upon his style. Qutba is the

next great calligraphist who is said to have invented four styles of the Kufic. After him we hear of Khalid (96/715), who stood out foremost amongst the artists of his period. The golden inscription on the Prophet's Mosque is believed to be the work of his penmanship. He also copied the first Koran we hear to have been illuminated with gold. In the Abbaside period, with the rise of monarchy and the growth of wealth and knowledge, the profession of the calligraphist received all the encouragement that an art might need. Mekka, Medi-



Fig. 29.

A page from the Kufic Koran on deer-skin, 11 century of the Hijra.



Fig. 30.

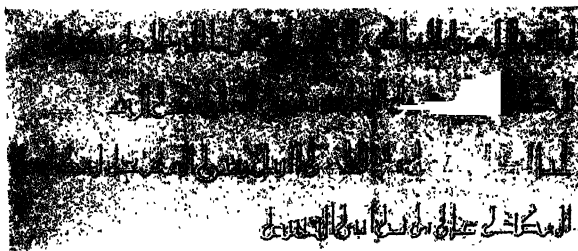


Fig. 31.

na, Basra, Kufa and Baghdad, etc., had their own schools of art.

1. Subhu l-A'sha, Vol. III, pp. 12-14.

Another age in the development of the Kufic calligraphy sets in with Khalil bin Ahmad (170 A. H.), the grammarian, and Ali bin Kusai (182 A. H.). Improvements introduced by them have been, more or less, retained to the present day. Kusai was the teacher of Mamun ar-Rashid. And Mamun ar-Rashid was the first lover of the art of calligraphy who collected as many specimens of good penmanship of all the various styles as could be obtained in his kingdom.

The Persians in pre-Islamic age are reported to have invented seven different styles of writing their language. All these styles differed according to the nature of the subject matter they contained or the person they were addressed to. Moslems seem to have classified some of their styles according to this old custom of the Persians. Most of these styles were combinations of one or more styles of the Kufic. For example, there was Al-Jali, the bold Kufic, used in royal correspondence and monumental inscriptions. The Sijjalat was the documental Kufic. Salasi was used in letters addressed to officials and subordinates. Miftah was a style compounded of the Salasin style and the Estrangelo script. Haram was the style used in letters addressed to ladies, etc. Styles used in the calligraphy of the Koran were other than these. The Kufic reached its excellence in the calligraphist Ibn Muqla (338 A. H.), who was a renowned artist of the reign of Al-Qahir-Billah the Abbaside. He is said to have invented the five main styles that prevailed after the Kufic lost its charm for the people.

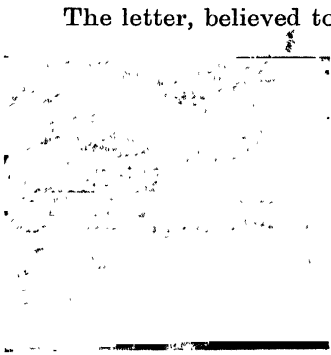


Fig. 32.

The letter, believed to be the very epistle of the Prophet that he wrote to the "Mukaukas" written in the 7th year of the Hijra (fig. 28), is perhaps the earliest specimen of the Arabic writing of the Moslem period. It differs from the cursive only in its stiffness and angularity. It presents the very form of the Arabic system of writing that calligraphers set to improve and beautify a few years later. A definite improvement is observable in the monuments of the period immedi-

ately following that of the Prophet. The mile-stone (fig. 32), marking 109 miles from Damascus, belonging to the reign of the Kalif Abdul Malik bin Marwan (65-86 A. H.), shows the marked improvement that calligraphy had gained over the previous style. Notwithstanding

the ravages of time that this mile-stone has withstood during the last fourteen centuries, it has kept much of its beauty intact. Letters are no longer irregular and wayward, they stand in order and keep their proportion and symmetry of form. The whole composition gives beautiful calligraphic effect. Compared to the letter of the Prophet the writing of this stone is less angular and less stiff.

Another Kufic inscription (fig. 33), engraved on marble and dated

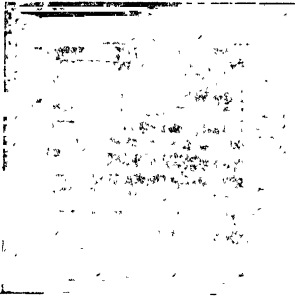


Fig. 33.

in any of these two inscriptions.

155/771 A. D., belonging to the Mosque Al-Mahdi, is an example of the regular Kufic that had developed during the 1st and the 2nd centuries of the Moslem era, before the ornamental Kufic came into existence. The tips of the strokes, both vertical and oblique, are pointed, and, sometimes, have a flourish added to the vertical shafts. The whole composition is compact and the lettering precise ; no vowel-dots are used

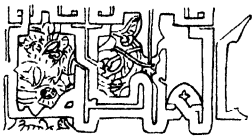


Fig. 34.



Fig. 35.

Fragments of the Kufic writing on the niche of a mosque at Mosul, dated 576 A. H.

By the first quarter of the 2nd century of the Hijra, the Arabs had their rule established beyond the western shore of the Caspian sea in the Russian territory. Some of the Kufic inscriptions discovered in Darband and Baku, by M. N. de Khanikoff, are in striking contrast to the regular style of the Kufic writings of that period.¹ The calligraphists there, in many instances, have definitely declined to follow the angular Kufic of Baghdad that prevailed in the then Moslem world. Their ideal was the cursive style of the papyrus. However, when this comparatively rounder style is cut in stone, it keeps neither the character of the angular Kufic nor that of the cursive. It develops an independent style which is somewhere between the two.

1. Journal Asiatique, 1862, p. 103.

The fac-simile of the inscription given by M. N. de Khanikoff, dated

175 or 195 A. H., is in the Kufic of the ultra round style.¹ It also bears the vowel dots. The lettering of this inscription is extremely beautiful. I am inclined to believe that the calligraphy of those inscriptions must have been deeply influenced by the then prevalent Syriac. The Syriac inscription, d. 677 A. D., discovered in the cemetery of Khusrav,² Persia (fig. 37), will bear witness to the intimate resemblance that exists between the Baku inscriptions and this Syriac writing. The letters in it are traced in their outlines, which method was

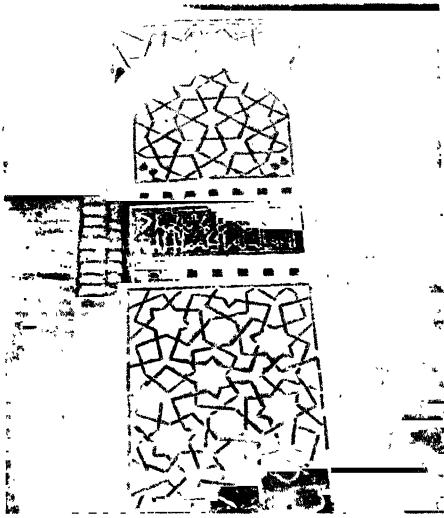


Fig. 36.

Plaited Kufic in relief on a pretence door in the Mosque of Abul Qasim, at Mosul (54/1148).



Fig. 37.



Fig. 38.



Fig. 39.

also followed, sometimes in the copying of the Koran. The vowel dots that were adopted in the Arabic system from the Syriac are observable in this specimen in their original form. In the early Kufic too, as in this Syriac inscription, words ran horizontally, for which peculiarity the style was named *maqur*, i. e. walking on all fours, in the manner of the quadrupeds (compare figs. 37, 38, 39).

The principle which separates one style of the Kufic from the other of the class, is the principle of different proportions in which vertical lines stand to the oblique ones and the intervening curves, and also the proportion that the breadth of the line has to its length; the unit of measure being the square dot that the pen makes with its point, without being pressed beyond its actual breadth. For instance, the long connecting

1. Journal Asiatique, 1862, p. 103.

2. Journal Asiatique, Jan. 1885, p. 44.

links of letters that give an oblong character to the style may be shortened and the words rendered square in form. The word Muhammad, which in Kufic has generally an oblong position, may be pressed into square dimensions by shortening the length of the connecting links of its letters (fig. 40).

40. I have already remarked that the Caucasus styles of Kufic are peculiar in themselves. As an example of this peculiarity I may refer to the Baku inscription dated 471 A. H. on the mosque built by Ar-Rashid b. Muhammad b. Abi Bakr (fig. 41). The first glance at it is sure to convince us of its originality. It cannot be classed among the styles of the Kufic that are known to have existed in different parts of the Moslem world. Its letters are simple and undecorated. The distinctive feature of it lies in the irregular treatment of its vertical strokes, which are short, flat at the top or pointed and stand out like a row of irregular teeth; the oblique strokes, along with the main horizontal bases of the words are distorted so that the composition of the inscription has lost one half of the essential character of the Kufic style. The word *al-Masjid* (fig. 42)

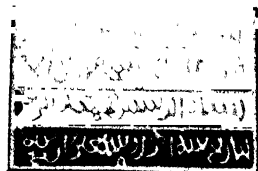


Fig. 41.



Fig. 42.

is bent in a semi-circular position. The basic lines are either tilted or given a long undulating curve.

The inscription dated 557 A. H., engraved on the sanctuary of Yusaf b. Kabir (fig. 43) presents another peculiarity of the Caucasian Kufic. The novelty of the style is distinctly observable in the treatment that each word of the composition receives individually. The word Zaki, at the end of the first line, is written in a zig-zag form. The four vertical shafts of the

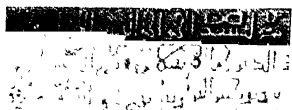


Fig. 43.

word (a)l-Isla(m) are joined with two horizontal lines above so that we have two triangles placed over the word as sheltering roofs.



It would appear that the people of the Caucasus mountains, being



Fig. 44.

Fig. 45.

more or less cut off from the cultured provinces in the south, continued to play with the first model of the Kufic that entered their country earlier than it did any other. Though it almost ceased to be used in other countries by the end of the 5th century of the Hijra,

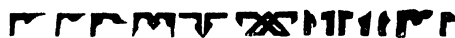
the Caucasian calligraphist used it down to the 8th. They indeed took it more as an ornament than as the script of a language. What is more amazing is that they seem to have worked their inscriptions as individual pieces of artistic work, not necessarily connected with other inscriptions in the mode of their lettering (figs. 44, 45). The tomb-stone dated 670 A. H. gives us a unique style of a fantastic writing, in which the round variety of the Kufic is treated in a manner that the writing gives the impression more of a work wrought by the corrosive forces of Nature on cemented floor than of the chisel of the artist. The features of the letters are concealed by breaking the continuity of their lines and by giving them fantastic, and, as though unintentionally, most unexpected dimensions, resembling the unmindful scribbling of a child that has just learnt to write his ABC. The result is extravagant to the point of being bizarre. The word *sa'd*, if I have rightly followed Dr. Khanikoff's reading of this inscription, shows the letter *d* (at the left end of the word), in its peculiar flourish.



Fig 46.



47.



48.



49.



50.



51.



52.



53.



54.



55.



56.

A vertical line, standing by itself or occurring at the end of a word, represents the letter *a* of the Arabic alphabet and forms part of many other letters. There is no end to the manner in which this vertical stroke may be written. It may have a flat top, a pointed one ; the point may be slanting to the right or to the left, may have a small line projected to either of its sides, or both sides in the shape of an arrow ; it may taper upwards or downwards, the line itself may bend to any moderately acute angle or curve ; it may curve at the top in the shape of a hook ; bend one way and coil to the other in any graceful manner (figs. 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52).

If the writing is executed in extreme angular style the letters take the form of rectangular or square blocks piled one on the other to compose words (fig. 30).

Vertical strokes, when they occur in succession as in the word Allah, may be written in uniform height, or in gradually descending order, or the middle one shorter than the two of equal height on both sides ; or the middle one may be taller than the either on each side (figs. 57, 58). All these shafts may also rise to equal heights, intertwine and interlace (figs. 7, 10, 59, 65), or bend against each other in oval curves (fig. 5).



Fig. 57.



58.

59.

point on its body once or more than once (fig. 60) and straightened again. These bends may be sharply angular or round. Instead of these bends the stroke might have a simple knot or two ; the knot may be



60.



61.



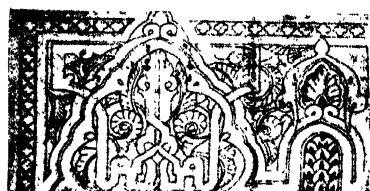
62.



63.

interlaced. A stroke may be written in double lines in a variety of ways, interlacing (figs. 60, 61, 62, 63) or entwining once or more than once. Strokes that lie apart from each other, the oblique ones or curves intervening them, may also be brought to interlace each other once or more than once.

Vertical strokes may also be so joined together at the top that they form a horizontal rafter over the word, and may be woven into geometrical or floral figures. This arrangement divides words



65.

into compartments, and the triangles hanging from the horizontal bar above give the impression of chandeliers. Such compartments may be ornamented with wheeling twigs and swaying leaves with graceful sweeps from one compartment of the word to the other (figs. 10, 34, 23, 53, 65).

The oblique line is also treated in the same way. It primarily



66.



Fig. 67.



Fig. 68.

Fig 69.



Fig. 70.

serves the purpose of joining two letters together and also forms part of some of the letters of the Arabic alpha-



bet It may be simply doubled, twisted once or more than once and, in case it forms a separate letter, may end in a leaf, a loop or any proportionate geometrical figure. These oblique



Fig. 71.

shafts may also interlace or entwine in various ways as shown in figures above

The square, oval or circle also forms part of some letters. It may be written in any decorative form which does not completely change the character of the stroke, may also have extra flourishes and may be drawn in lines entwining each other.



Fig. 72.

Every kind of line, especially the vertical one, may broaden and blossom into any floral form or terminate in an animal or, though very rarely, in a human face (fig. 53), it may be executed in the form of a capital of a pillar with spiral corners(fig. 72).

The chinese seal pattern proved such a success that often the lattice work of screen, cut in marble, wood or plaster was worked out

in the Kufic in most ingenious manners. In this triangular Kufic vertical and oblique lines were woven into each other in fret-work (figs. 73, 74, 75).

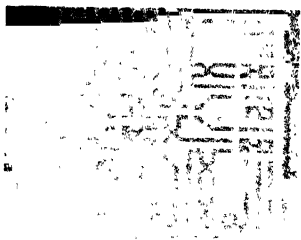


Fig. 73.

in use side by side with the Kufic was developed by calligraphists and termed the Naskh, the subject of our next section.¹

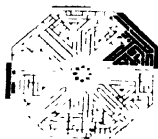


Fig. 74.



Fig. 75.

1. I have reproduced with gratitude some of the details given by Mr. S. Flury of the Kufic inscriptions of Kisimkazi Mosque (Zanzibar), in his article in JRAS, April, 1922.

REVIEWS

Dharma and Society :

By Gualtherus H. Mees, M. A. (Cantab), LL. D. (Leyden),
Luzac & Co., 46, Great Russell St., London, W. C. 1.
pp. XVI+206.

THE book is divided into two parts. In the first part, the author examines the concept of dharma and the different meanings which were attached to it at different times. He also describes varna or the ideal social organization of the Hindus and tells us how far it did, and how far it did not, tally with the caste system of ancient India.

In the second part of the book, Dr. Mees enters into the study of varna in greater detail. Personally, he is in favour of the organic conception of society ; and, in his opinion, the ideal varna organization, which recognised innate differences between man and man and set up different standards of duty for the four universal classes, is ultimately a wiser arrangement than any scheme of organization which denies this essential difference between man and man, and believes in their latent sameness. Dr. Mees holds that the ideal varna organization was calculated to develop man's personality in a more fruitful manner than other social arrangements. It also did so without any prejudice to social welfare. Indeed, it struck a very happy balance between the claims of personality and of social well-being.

The reader will thus notice that although the book is mainly concerned with describing the social concepts and ideals of ancient India, yet it is replete with criticisms and evaluations of those things according to the author's personal beliefs. In so far as it is a statement of opinions, it lies beyond the province of the present reviewer's examination. But where the author is concerned with social archaeology, i. e. the history of social institutions, there might be something for us to say.

In the author's own words, he has "been provisionally endeavouring to show that the system of four Varnas, the Chaturvarnya, was conceived on the basis of degrees of culture and sociality. Social service was seen as the test of Varna, service as a natural outcome of the stage of individual cultural development. Varna was not based on profession or occupation, nor primarily and exclusively on race, the latter however predestinating to some extent the Varna of a person. From our enquiry we come to the principle : A man's Varna shows itself according to his behaviour as a member of society" (p. 59). He then tells us that "Varna is both theory and ideal. This means that it represents fundamental laws of society demonstrating the tendencies of individuals and groups in the social composition. In so far Varna represents laws of *social facts that are*. Next it propagates them as *ideals* to be manifested in the social constitution. It presents the normal, the socializing tendencies as opposite the abnormal, separative tendencies that are at work in society. If posited as ideal, varna presents facts (as conceived) how they *ought to be*" (p. 60).

On the other hand, jatis, i.e. castes, have not always corresponded with varnas. There are only four natural classes or varnas, but hundreds or even thousands of jatis or castes in Hindu society. The author is of opinion that "the economic theory is not tenable" in explaining the origin of the caste system. The racial theory of Risley is only partly so. But he believes that the fundamental fact is that the caste system which grew out of a federation of the conqueror and the conquered in ancient India was deliberately made to conform to the ideal varna organization. As we have pointed out, the purpose of this organization was to render men happy by giving adequate scope for the development of their personality, by stressing the importance of Brahminical virtues, by stimulating in men of lower varnas the desire to develop Brahminical qualities by giving additional privileges to the possessor of the latter, by doing justice to men of lower varna by setting up different standards of duty and of morality for them and so on. When the caste system was made to conform to this ideal varna organization, men were happy ; and it was the object of the caste system to bring all human society in conformity with the above ideal of human organization.

In this far, Dr. Mees is in agreement with Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Roy, the editor of *Man in India*, who also holds that the caste system was essentially designed to help men in spiritual evolution.

He believes that by placing the Brahmins at the head of society and giving them additional privileges, social leaders designedly placed a premium upon *sattwa guna* over *rajo guna* and *tamo guna*. It was calculated to stimulate men to develop the *sattwa* elements in their character.

This is a matter in which there is not much reason to disagree. But to say that this was also the cause or the origin of the caste system, and not an after-thought, is where we fail to agree with Dr. Mees.

Let us draw an analogy. The British people came to India as traders, and the chief relation subsisting between them and the Indians today is as between exploiters and exploited. It is a fact that Hindu civilization has hardly any vigour left now ; and so far as life-giving qualities are concerned, the Britishers might justly claim that English or European civilization is superior to Hindu civilization. There are many honest Englishmen who believe that they have come to India on a civilizing mission ; and they would deny the fact of economic exploitation as unworthy of notice. When such men honestly try to bring about a synthesis of English and European cultures, they might describe their reform movements as calculated to stimulate particular qualities among the Hindu population at the expense of some of their national characteristics. But a historian knows that this view is only an outward view of social ideals, it does not represent the whole historical truth.

In the same way, although the organization of varna may have actually been designed to stimulate particular qualities and depress others, yet there was a large economic fact which underlay the whole social scheme and which often escaped men's notice because of its ubiquitousness. In its origin caste had much to do with racial and cultural differences, with the suppression and exploitation of conquered tribes who were placed in the Sudra varna.

But this fact of economic arrangement was not all. It was overlain by the aftergrowth of spiritual ideals of which Dr. Mees as well as Rai Bahadur Sarat Ch. Roy have taken due note. We only believe that they have stressed the latter aspect, not unnecessarily, but at the expense of the economic organization underlying caste. That the caste system undergoes considerable modification with economic changes is the greatest proof of what it actually rests upon.

In spite of this over-emphasis on one aspect, Dr. Mees's book is a valuable contribution to the study of caste in so far as it describes some of the ideal aspects of that organization. The author has spared

no pains in gathering suitable materials or in making his presentation clear. There are just a few places where there is a touch of diffusiveness or of mysticism. But they are, on the whole, so few that the book will remain an important contribution to the understanding of India's social organization.

Nirmal Kumar Bose.

Eastern Lights :

By Mahendranath Sarkar,

Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, Price Rs. 4/- or 8s. pp. 305 + xiii.

THE book under review comprises a series of lectures delivered by the author on Indian Philosophy and Modern Hinduism in Italy and Germany. We learn that "The dynamical and creative ideals and values of Indian life as manifested through the great spiritual personalities in India are presented here for the first time with vigour and persuasiveness," and that "the book is practically a mirror of Indian life from the ages of the Upanishads down to the modern times." In this "brief account of some phases of life, thought and mysticism of India," one would naturally expect to find an exposition of the fundamental concepts of Indian Philosophy and Religion realised in life and speculation by seers and philosophers of the land.

But only a section of the whole field is presented here. The book begins with a treatment of the Upanishads and passes on to the Geeta, Bhagavata-Purana and the Tantras ; Rammohan, Dayananda, Ramkrishna and Aurobindo are affiliated to the main sources of Indian spiritualism and the author's somewhat vague speculations on Reality, Beauty, Values and what he calls "Cosmic Man" are offered. No reference is made to the medieval saints like Nanaka, Kabir, Dadu and others ; and among moderns, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore are not honoured even with a passing mention. The book cannot, therefore, claim to pass as "a mirror of Indian life from the ages of the Upanishads down to the modern times." With these Eastern Lights left out, the Oriental firmament would naturally look a little less luminous in spite of the author's panegyric on what he calls "luminous Silence."

The author distinguishes between Transcendent Divine and Immanent Divine and tries to show how the two are interlaced in various ways in the life and spirituality of India. A marked leaning towards Mysticism can be clearly discerned. But, unlike Gentile, he



Ranee Chanda

does not offer a philosophical justification of Mysticism. He professes to approach philosophy through life and so does not care for logical precision and systematic exposition. The result is that the book is full of *obiter dicta* and *ex cathedra* utterances without any attempt at rational argument to convince the plain man or the philosopher. The author appears to be appealing more to the heart than to the head. But unfortunately he lacks the appropriate literary style which could help him in his object. The plain man is harassed by a plethora of philosophical jargon and the philosopher is only irritated, if not disgusted, by such vulgarisation of philosophy. Meaningless and fanciful platitudes, combined with unnecessary repetitions, render whatever value the book might otherwise have had completely nugatory. The author could have easily compressed the book to a third of its volume, and that would spare the reader useless waste of time.

Though the author makes a lavish use of such ultra-philosophical phrases as 'Super-cosmic', 'Cosmic-Divine', 'immanentism', 'dynamism', 'supramental', 'divine elasticity', 'Omniscient Silence', and the like, when he comes to talk about philosophy proper, we find surprising evidence of philosophic howlers. While discussing the importance of intuition in philosophy, the author proceeds to say, "Kant and Croce have confined intuition to aesthetic sensibility..." (p. 96). But "aesthetic sensibility" connotes two radically distinct entities in Kant and Croce, for Kant's Transcendental Aesthetic is concerned with space and time. As Croce himself says about Kant, "The *a priori* of the intuition led him not to art but to mathematics ('Transcendental Aesthetic ')" (Croce, Logic, p. 536).

This one instance will suffice to bring out the philosophic merits of the book. Such errors are unpardonable in a Professor of Philosophy in the premier College of Bengal, and doubly unpardonable in one who aspires to interpret the message of the East to the West.

Nor may we congratulate the author on his style, which is diffuse and verbose. In places his writing appears as a caricature of Biblical English which he has tried to imitate in vain. Mixed metaphors and un-English idioms abound. Construction of paragraphs betrays the author's lack of balance and sense of proportion. In some places, transliteration of Sanskrit words is wrong and left without diacritical marks. It is really sad to find the author of "Studies in Vedantic Thought and Culture" indulging in such vagaries of speculation as we have in the present book.

In spite of all these defects, the book contains a few valuable

comments on Schopenhauer, Bergson, Croce, Gentile and other European philosophers from the Indian standpoint. But unfortunately these comments are made in passing and have not been argued out in detail so as to carry conviction. We hope the author will in future try to work out his criticism in detail so as to bring out its distinctive features.

The publishers are to be congratulated on their excellent printing and get-up of the book.

Surendranath Goswami.

Proceedings and Transactions of the Seventh All India Oriental Conference—

Baroda. December, 1933.

Published on behalf of the Government of Baroda by the Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1935, pp. CXLV+1200, Price Rs. 10/-.

THE Seventh session of the All-India Oriental Conference was held at Baroda from the 27th to 29th December, 1933. Scholars from all over India numbering 387, had registered themselves as members of the Conference. These and many others attended the session "in order to take stock of the various activities of Oriental scholars in and outside India." The proceedings and transactions of this seventh Conference have been just published in one volume, two years after the date of meeting—rather an unusually long delay if we remember that the *Actes du XVIIIe Congrès International des Orientalistes (Leyden)* took less than a year in being published in book form.

The Baroda Conference was divided in fourteen sections, such as Sanskrit-Vedic, Avesta and Iranian, History, Archaeology, Arabic, Pandit Parishad, etc ; and more than two hundred papers were read and discussed in the sectional meetings. In the volume under notice, one hundred and forty selected articles, some of them only in summary, have been included. The proceedings also contain enlightened addresses by H. H. the Maharaja Gaekwad, Mr. K. P. Jayaswal (President), and Sir V. T. Krishnamachari. For obvious reasons, it is not possible here, within this short space, to review the results of the researches contained in the papers, which represent in a way the present position of Oriental studies in our country and indicate the progress made by Indian scholarship in restoring to this land her forgotten treasures. Suffice it to say that the volume will occupy for long an honoured place in the library of an Orientalist both in India and abroad.



Benode Mukherjee

The printing of the book is excellent, in fact quite in keeping with the scientific merit of the work. But the binding is deplorable ; it would have been more handy and useful, had the work been published in two separate well-bound volumes. And this could have been easily done, when we note, with gratitude, that the Gaekwad Maharaja had donated Rs. 3,000/- for publication purposes, in addition to Rs. 10,000/- for the Conference.

Manilal Patel.

Bhagvat Gita or Naghma—i—Khudawandi :

By M. Ajmal Khan, M. A.

(Published by the Institute of Divine Truths, Daira,
Bahurgunj, Allahabad , Crown 8 vo. pp. 176. Price Re. 1/-)

THIS is an excellent Urdu translation of the Gospel of Lord Krishna. It contains an introduction of 62 pages in which every aspect of the "Divine Commentary Of Vedas" has been discussed. The object of this Urdu rendering is to show to the Urdu reading public, specially the Mussulmans, the fundamental unity of all religions. Numerous parallel quotations from Muslim mystics and saints will surely bring home to the reader the "greatness of the Geeta", which according to Bankimchandra "lies in the intense practicality of its sublime teaching."

A preface by Dr. Bhagwandas should help the reader to trust in the accuracy of the translation. This is the first attempt of its kind in Urdu by a Mussulman.

M. Ziauddin.

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